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ABSTRACT

Debates about how moral education ought to be provided have engaged many of the best minds in education and stirred public controversies throughout U.S. history. The vast array of European peoples who settled the American colonies brought a commitment to moral education and a variety of approaches to the task. While French and Spanish settlers brought Catholicism to the New World, northern European Protestants did the most to give moral education its character in the original 13 colonies. The 19th century brought an insistence on rigid self-restraint, moral purity, and cultural conformity. Public schools became the preferred educational institutions for most citizens as state systems expanded rapidly. A movement to establish nonsectarian schools grew out of Protestant social thought and modes of organization. At the same time, Sunday schools appeared to bring Christian discipline and discipleship to the working classes. As the schools of the late 19th and early 20th centuries expanded their functions, moral education was forced to compete for a place in an increasingly crowded curriculum. By the 1940s the role of moral education began to erode. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, schools either adopted neutrality with regard to moral questions or became indifferent to them. At the same time, however, some educators and others sought to restore moral education in the schools. In more recent years, there have been efforts: (1) to take nontraditional approaches to moral education; (2) to restore virtue-centered character education; or (3) to provide public support to private schools. Few can doubt that the decision regarding whether to restore moral education in the schools will be a fateful one. (LBG)

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By

B. Edward McClellan

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About the Author

Dr. B. Edward McClellan is a professor of education and American Studies at Indiana University. He has served as the Associate Dean of the School of Education at Indiana University. He is the co-author of *Education and American Culture* and *The Social History of American Education*. His articles have been published in such journals as *Educational Theory, Schools and Teaching*, and *Journal of Midwest History of Education Society*. He has served as a project reviewer for the U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He has also served as president of the Midwest History of Education Society and program chair for the Foundations Division of the National Conference on Teachers Education. He is a member of the American Historical Association, Organization of American Historians, and the American Educational Research Association, among others. Professor McClellan earned his bachelor's degree in History from Wesleyan University, Master of Arts degree in History from University of Cincinnati, and his Doctor of Philosophy in History from Northwestern University in 1972.

Foreword

Moral education is a hot topic in the public agenda of contemporary curriculum reformers. Arguments abound about the nature and norms of this field of education. Controversies continue about what it is, why it is important, and how to do it. The perspective of history and the insights of adept historians, such as B. Edward McClellan, may illuminate current debates about the ends and means of moral education. Through historical inquiry, we may uncover the roots of our contemporary controversies, trace their growth to the present, and clarify the alternative viewpoints surrounding them.

B. Edward McClellan has provided in this work ideas, information, and insights about the origins, development, and issues of moral education in our American schools. Thus, this publication may contribute to an improvement of current discourse and debate among moral educators about how to build and sustain core values and sound traits of character in the students of our schools.

During the past seven years, the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education (ERIC/ChESS) at Indiana University has emphasized trends, ideas, and issues about education for citizenship in a constitutional democracy. This volume by Professor McClellan, a first-rate historian, is the latest in a series of volumes and reports produced by ERIC/ChESS to stimulate thought and action about education for responsible citizenship.

—John J. Patrick
Director, ERIC Clearinghouse for Social
Studies/Social Science Education;
Director, Social Studies Development Center;
and Professor of Education, Indiana University

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My debts to colleagues are enormous. A. Stafford Clayton originally suggested that I study the history of moral education. John Patrick urged me to put the results of my study into this book, then waited patiently while I went about the task all too deliberately. I have enjoyed the assistance of Diana Bush, Alex Duke, Jenness Hall, and Donald Moore. James C. Carper, Patricia A. Bauch, Michael J. Guerra, and Gary Ingersoll have generously shared materials with me. Ronald Cohen and Hamilton Cravens have been mentors and friends for many years, and have offered much good advice on this project. Dean Donald Warren has been unstinting in his support. My greatest professional debt, however, is to William J. Reese—fellow traveler to countless research collections, sensitive critic, constant supporter, and good friend.

My personal debts are equally large. I am grateful to my parents, whose interest in moral education long preceded mine, and to my sons Douglas and Robert, who had more to do with this book than they might suspect. But it is to my wife, Mary, that I owe the most. She has been a source of superb advice and unending support. This book is for her.

Preface

Few matters have captured the attention of a wider range of educators in the past quarter of a century than the place of moral education in American schools. Debates about how moral instruction ought to be provided—or whether it ought to be provided at all—have engaged many of the best minds in education and stirred a number of political controversies as well. Within academic circles the issues have received an extraordinarily thoughtful consideration from the likes of philosophers Andrew Oldenquist and Kenneth A. Strike, developmental psychologists Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, and William G. Perry, Jr., and curriculum specialists Gerald Grant and Kevin Ryan. The academic debates in turn have acquired a political urgency from the keen interest of the U.S. Department of Education, especially while under the leadership of William J. Bennett, and from the continuing activism of a variety of citizens' groups, ranging from civil libertarians concerned about indoctrination to religious fundamentalists worried about modern relativism.

My own interest in this discourse began when, first, the journal *Viewpoints* and, then, a conference sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, invited me to provide some historical perspectives on moral education. The task proved to be a daunting one. Historians of education, to be sure, had not entirely ignored the topic. They had, for example, carefully documented the moral earnestness of early textbooks, the stringent standards of conduct for teachers, and the evolving fashions in moral philosophy. Yet, they had done little to trace the shifting institutional responsibilities for moral education or to explain changing notions about the nature of moral growth. More seriously, they had barely taken notice of the declining place of moral education in the twentieth century school and college, leaving unexplored the very development that so many recent reformers have been trying to reverse.

The large gaps in previous historical scholarship have led me to a long exploration of original sources in an effort to find the broad patterns in the history of moral education in America. This book is a product of that exploration. It is written in part in the hope that it will provide perspective for those contemporary Americans who struggle with the problem of moral instruction, in part in the hope that it will add to the body of scholarship in history of education and stimulate my colleagues in that field to extend the inquiry.

The dual purpose of the book has led me to make some decisions about emphases that require a word of explanation. First, I have confined my inquiry to formal efforts to provide moral education. Although sociologists believe that the rules and rhythms of school life—the hidden curriculum—may have more to do with shaping moral attitudes than formal instruction, it is formal instruction that has been the issue in recent debates. Second, I have given more attention to elementary and secondary schools than to institutions of higher learning. Here I have been influenced by the fact that Americans, especially in the last two centuries, have tended to view moral education as a process that takes place primarily during childhood or early adolescence. Finally, I have dealt at greater length with recent events than with earlier ones. This is not, as it might at first seem, an attempt to emphasize the significance of recent events, but rather an effort to provide a fuller treatment of developments that historians have tended to neglect.

Although this work seeks to inform contemporary discussion of moral education, it does not take a position in the debates. The question of what choices we ought to make is a matter better left to philosophers, theologians, and others whose task it is to define the good life and find ways to bring it into being. History serves this process best not by providing its own answers, but rather by offering perspective and suggesting a rough sense of limits and possibilities. If this service falls short of insuring wisdom, it may at least encourage prudence and thereby assist those who must make the vital decisions on the proper place of moral education in American schools.

CHAPTER 1

Moral Education In Early America

1

The vast array of European peoples who settled the American colonies brought with them both an extraordinary commitment to moral education and a rich variety of approaches to the task. The common commitment was rooted in the predominant Christian faith of the settlers; the variety was the product of both their diverse ecclesiastical and national backgrounds and the particular circumstances of their settlements. Especially in the early years, the various groups competed with each other, seeking not simply to perpetuate the faith among their own young but also to Christianize native American populations and convert believers from other denominations.

French and Spanish settlers were the primary bearers of Catholic traditions in the new world. With the help of highly educated and committed teaching orders, they successfully transplanted their faith to the American continent and made impressive missionary efforts among the Indians. Their strongest gains, however, lay outside the thirteen colonies that eventually banded together to create the United States, and their contributions to the mainstreams of American moral education were peripheral during the colonial era. Only a small band of English settlers in Maryland perpetuated a significant tradition of Catholic moral education in the thirteen colonies, and their efforts were often circumscribed by legal restrictions and overwhelmed by the preponderance of Protestant immigrants.

Although the French and Spanish left important legacies in parts of Canada, Latin America, and what would become the western United States, it was Protestants from northern Europe, especially from Great Britain, who did most to give moral education its character in the thirteen colonies. From the time of the first plantations in Virginia and Massachusetts, Protestantism in its various forms had an overwhelming influence on American life and culture. Yet, even Protestants were not of one mind about moral education. They varied by sect, by nationality, and by the nature of their missions to the new world. Most important, they varied by religious temperament.

Religious Temperament and Moral Education

The Evangelical Temperament. Historian Philip Greven has identified three general Protestant temperaments in the colonial era—evangelical, moderate, and genteel—and has described in great depth the effect of each on childrearing and education. A study of these temperaments provides an excellent starting point for an understanding of moral education in the colonial era.[1]

Christians of evangelical temperament, Greven argues, took a relatively authoritarian and repressive approach to moral education. They believed in a demanding God and a depraved humanity, and they brought an extraordinary intensity to the task of preparing children to accept the gift of grace, to do battle with the forces of evil, and to glorify God by leading lives of faith and virtue.

The first step in this process was to break the willfulness of children, to teach them to obey their parents, to deny their own evil impulses, and to accept the authority of God. Thus, at a very early age evangelicals enforced a rigorous discipline, systematically suppressing signs of self-assertiveness or disobedience. The aim was to implant a powerful conscience that would serve as a guide during the difficult pilgrimage through a world full of evil and temptation. What followed as children grew older was simply a reinforcement of the early moral training with parents watching carefully for any sign of willfulness or wayward behavior.

The ideal setting for moral education, evangelicals believed, was the nuclear family; and Greven finds evidence that evangelicals worked hard to promote the isolation of the nuclear family from potentially corrupt influences. Evangelical families even feared the possibility that servants or grandparents in the household might weaken the authority of parents or soften their rigorous efforts to discipline and instruct the young.

The Moderate Temperament. Colonial Americans of more moderate temperament took a markedly different approach to childrearing and moral education. They believed in a more approachable God who lived in covenant with humankind, and they appreciated the good as well as the evil in human nature. Their goal was not the ruthless suppression of willfulness but rather the control of passions through the cultivation of reason, virtue, and a moderate piety that emphasized duty and industry rather than rigorous self-denial.

Like the evangelicals, moderates demanded obedience from their children and worked diligently to encourage good behavior; but instead of attempting to break the wills of young children, they sought to shape character gradually through a regimen that combined affection with instruction and discipline. This approach put less emphasis on the early education of children than on the long-term process of teaching the right values and eliciting the appropriate behaviors.

Moderates were far less likely than evangelicals to insist that moral education take place in the nuclear family. They not only welcomed the

involvement of servants and extended kin, they expected other agencies in the society to play a role as well. Since moral education was a gradual process that allowed for occasional assertiveness and misbehavior, the moderating influences of people outside the home were unlikely to pose a serious threat. Indeed, on balance, the influence of a wide circle of virtuous men and women was likely to encourage moral growth.

The Genteel Temperament. A small group of powerful and well-to-do Americans exhibited a third religious temperament. Labelled "genteel" by Greven, this temperament was in important respects a product of the high status of those who shared it. It posited a distant but benevolent God who made few demands on His earthly children. Free of the doubts and tensions that plagued the evangelicals and moderates, the genteel lived freer, more self-assertive lives, secure in the faith that God would reward them for their decency and virtue.

With their children, the genteel tended to be indulgent and affectionate. Instead of suppressing or sharply controlling the willfulness of their young, they encouraged a measure of self-assertiveness. When discipline was necessary, they often assigned the task to servants, thereby preserving their own affectionate ties with the young. Their approach to moral education put less emphasis on the creation of a rigorous conscience than on the development of decorum, of proper respect for the family, and of acceptance of duty within a social system that allowed men and women of their rank the luxury of self-display and ornamentation.

The genteel—in the North as well as the South—placed a heavy emphasis on the family, and they began the moral education of the child within its circle. There the child learned to respect the family and its members and acquired the attitudes and skills that would help preserve the family's lofty place in the social hierarchy. Often with the help of tutors, children acquired the learning appropriate to their station as well as a sense of duty that helped curb their self-assertiveness and encouraged public service. Formal schooling in academies or colleges simply added finishing touches to an education that was shaped primarily by the family.

Changing Configurations

Although Greven finds examples of these three temperaments during most of the colonial era and even in the early decades of the nineteenth century, there is substantial evidence to suggest that moral education changed markedly from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. Seventeenth-century Americans tended to follow the rigorous approaches of the evangelicals while eighteenth-century Americans became increasingly moderate in their approaches. Genteel approaches were never widespread but were far more common in the late colonial era than in the early years when a distinct gentlemanly class had not yet developed.

The Early Years. The first settlers, in both Virginia and Massachusetts, exhibited extraordinary anxiety about the moral well-being

of their children and began to make provision for education even before they had assured the physical survival of their colonies. They were alarmed by youthful rebellion and willfulness and by the seeming inability of parents to establish control and offer instruction. The Massachusetts General Court was sufficiently concerned that in 1646 it established the death penalty for any child above the age of sixteen who "shall curse or smite their natural father or mother . . . unless it can be sufficiently testified that the parents have binn very unchristianly negligent in the education of such children, or so provoked them by extreme and cruell correction that they have binn forced thereunto to preserve themselves from death or maiming."[2] Although there is no record of executions for such offenses, this statute—and others like it—illustrated the depth of concern about the failures of moral education among early American settlers.

By the early 1640s both Massachusetts and Virginia had passed legislation to shore up educational processes that seemed to be failing. In each case, the new laws were designed to give local officials the power to provide for the education of children whose parents had failed to accomplish the task. The most celebrated piece of legislation was passed by the Massachusetts General Court in 1642. It expressed alarm about "the great neglect of many parents and masters in training up their children" and gave to town officials the power to fine negligent parents and place children in apprenticeships where they would be taught the moral and legal principles of the society as they acquired vocational skills and learned to read and write.[3]

Although the 1642 law made no mention of schools, a subsequent enactment called the "Ould Deluder Satan" law of 1647 required towns of more than fifty householders to appoint a schoolmaster to teach reading and writing and towns of more than a hundred householders to establish grammar schools to prepare some children for higher education, a way of insuring that the colony would continue to have educated leaders capable of preserving Christian values in the new land.[4]

The primary aim of these Massachusetts laws and of similar enactments in other colonies was not to create schools but rather to ensure that moral education be accomplished by whatever institutional means were available. The particular configurations of moral education varied significantly from place to place. Seventeenth-century New Englanders, for example, tended to combine moral education with instruction in basic skills of literacy and were more likely than many other colonists to give schools a substantial role in the educational process. Many Virginians on the other hand worked out of an oral culture and transmitted their values in more traditional ways. They placed less emphasis on literacy and built fewer schools, depending instead on families and churches to pass moral and religious values across the generations.

In most parts of the colonies in the seventeenth century, moral education began in the household. There parents—fathers as well as mothers—prayed with their children, instructed them in the doctrines of their reli-

gious faiths, taught them moral and civic virtues, punished excessive willfulness, and encouraged good behavior. The Puritan clergyman Cotton Mather, who reared his children in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, has left a particularly vivid account of the family's unending efforts to assure the moral growth of children. Mather talks of pouring "out continual Prayers and Cries to the God of all grace" for his children and of using a wide variety of occasions to teach them proper values:

> I begin betimes to entertain them with delightful Stories, especially scriptural ones. And still conclude with some *Lesson* of Piety; bidding them to learn that *Lesson* from the *Story*.
>
> And thus, every Day at the *Table*, I have used myself to tell a Story before I rise; and make the *Story* useful to the *Olive Plants about the Table*. . . .
>
> When the Children at any time accidentally come in my way, it is my custome to lett fall some *Sentence* or other, that may be monitory and profitable to them.[5]

The moral training that began in the family was often reinforced by a variety of other agencies. Masters of apprentices, for example, were expected not simply to induct their charges into a vocation but also to instruct them in the articles of religious faith, the principles of Christian virtue, and the laws of the colony. They were even expected in some places to teach reading and writing as they imparted skills in blacksmithing, candlemaking, printing, and the like.

Apprenticeship very probably touched the lives of more children than did the school. Where schools existed, however, they tended to assume broad responsibility for moral instruction. Although their special role was to teach the skills of literacy, schools infused the instruction with heavy doses of moral and religious education. Here even the learning of the alphabet was intertwined with the lessons of piety.

The church played a more limited and indirect role in moral education in the seventeenth century, especially in New England. In this age before the Sunday School, churches often provided guidance to adults about moral education but left the task itself to other institutions. Some children might learn from sermons, and others—especially older children aspiring to higher education—might receive special instruction from ministers or elders, but even religious education of the young was more likely to be found in the home than in the church.

Beyond such formal institutions as the family, apprenticeship, the school, and the church, children often acquired their values from the informal associations of community life. It was not uncommon in this day for children to associate with adults in the daily routines of life, and they undoubtedly learned much from those associations, especially since adults felt a strong responsibility for all the children of the community, not just for their own.

The substance of moral education in the seventeenth century also varied from place to place, as particular groups gave their special doctrinal

glosses to the common Christian faith, but everywhere religion suffused the instruction. For most seventeenth-century colonials, the catechism offered the beginning point for moral education. Catechisms were definitive statements of the beliefs of particular denominations or congregations, and catechetical teaching (i.e. asking questions to test the knowledge of children about these beliefs) was perhaps the most widely used pedagogical device of the seventeenth century.

Most catechisms began by leading children through a recitation of the basic doctrines of Christian faith. In New England, the shorter version of the Westminister Catechism opened with words that became familiar to generations of Reformed Christians and gave to Puritan children an early education in the fundamental beliefs of their religion:

Q. 1. *WHAT is the chief end of man?*
A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever.
Q. 2. *What rule hath God given, to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?*
A. The word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is the only rule to direct how we may glorify and enjoy him.
Q. 3. *What do the Scriptures principally teach?*
A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.
Q. 4. *What is God?*
A. God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.[6]

The basic rules of moral conduct were taught in the context of the religious doctrines, and they were rooted in scriptural commandments:

Q. 39. *What is the duty which God requires of man?*
A. The duty which God requires of man, is obedience to his revealed will.
Q. 40. *What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?*
A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience was the moral law.
Q. 41. *Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?*
A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.
Q. 42. *What is the sum of the ten commandments?*
A. The sum of the ten commandments is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind, and our neighbor as ourselves.[7]

What made the catechism so popular as a mode of religious and moral instruction was the control that it left in the hands of elders who were trying to preserve the orthodoxy of their faiths. Unlike the scriptures, which left room for interpretation, the prescribed questions and responses of the catechism worked to inhibit deviation and perpetuate tradition. Although colonial Americans prepared their children to read the Bible, they preferred the catechism as a way to impart early beliefs.

The lessons of the catechism were reinforced and developed in the hornbooks and primers used to teach children the alphabet and the elementary skills of literacy. Hornbooks were paddle-shaped pieces of wood covered by translucent horn which carried verses of scripture or little ditties such as:

> In Adam's Fall
> We sinned all

Primers contained simple verses, poems, songs, and stories designed to teach at once the skills of literacy and the virtues of Christian living.

Parents and teachers used these staples of colonial education to form the basis for classroom recitation, which was in important respects simply the catechectical method applied to materials other than formal church creeds. Children were expected to accept without question the simple truths of the hornbook and primer, to recite them to parent and teacher, and to apply them to their own daily behavior.

For the vast majority of children in the seventeenth century, formal education occupied only a small portion of their lives. Academic training for them rarely went beyond elementary moral education and schooling in the basic skills of literacy. For a highly select minority, however, formal education extended into the Latin Grammar school and the college. These students, almost always born to high status, were expected to provide leadership for a society in which educated clergy and magistrates were thought to be fully as important as a virtuous populace.[8]

Moral education suffused secondary schools and colleges much as it did elementary education, but at these more advanced levels students went well beyond the rote learning of simple pieties. Especially in the colleges they learned to interpret scripture, to understand theology, and to apply knowledge of the liberal arts to the great moral, religious, and social questions of the day. Formal courses in ethics and theology provided a sophisticated understanding of the tenets of Christian faith while study of the classics gave students a thorough grounding in Western moral traditions.

Both the Puritan founders of Harvard College (1639) and the Anglican founders of William and Mary (1693) believed that educated rulers and clergymen would preserve the orthodoxy and set the moral tone of the society. Unlike some pietistic sects and many later evangelical denominations, they believed that all learning, secular as well sacred, supported Christian faith—at least as long as students brought "right reason" to their study. In turn, they expected educated leaders to interpret the scriptures to the less learned and to serve a broadly educational function on all matters related to morality.

The Eighteenth Century. Eighteenth-century Americans did not alter in any fundamental way the character of moral education, but they did

give the process a decidedly different tone, especially in the settled and prosperous cities and towns along the Atlantic coast. Here life had acquired a comfortable, almost casual, quality about it, and moral education began to lose some of the tense rigidity that early settlers had given it.

At the root of the new moral tone was the extraordinary stability of family and community life in the towns and cities along the Eastern seaboard where most Americans still lived. In these "peaceable kingdoms," as one historian has labelled eighteenth-century communities, Americans expressed a new confidence about their ability to transmit faith and culture across the generations.[9] A steadily growing prosperity discouraged children from leaving their home towns (as they had often done in the seventeenth century and would again in the nineteenth century). Now young men remained at home, often finding lifetime employment in expanding family businesses, while young women assumed their own secure places in the web of families that knit together eighteenth-century communities.

The expectation that the young would remain at home encouraged a moderate approach to the task of moral education. The ability of community elders to supervise the education of children well into adulthood and the power of parents to offer or deny their young a place in family enterprises combined to give these eighteenth-century Americans an extraordinary confidence in their capacity to educate their young. Since moral education could spread out over many years, few felt a need to complete the task at an early age. Instead they came to view education as a long-term process: lessons not well learned at age eight could be learned at age ten or age eighteen or even during the years of early adulthood.

The ability to accomplish the moral education of children over a long period of time gave eighteenth-century Americans the luxury of choosing to complete the task in a variety of ways, using a variety of agencies. Unlike their seventeenth-century predecessors who tended to give a tight definition to the responsibilities of the family and apprenticeship, these Americans were willing to countenance a variety of approaches. Sometimes families exercised a tight control over the whole process; sometimes they entrusted the schools, the churches, or even neighbors with primary responsibility. Given the strength of their communities and the length of time available to them, elders could allow moral education to proceed in an almost infinite variety of ways.

The new, more casual approach to moral education was no sign that eighteenth-century Americans had lost their commitment to traditional values. The aphorisms of Benjamin Franklin and others indicated that the fundamental rules had not changed. Now, however, most Americans had enough confidence in the educative power of their communities that they could countenance an occasional bending of the rules. Even the men who codified the morality of the age could safely deviate from time to time, as the life of Franklin so colorfully illustrates. In this atmosphere of confidence and stability, such deviations neither presaged individual lives of

debauchery nor threatened the harmony of the communities. Communities were too strong, and their corrective, educative powers too well established.

This new moral tone was never universal in the eighteenth century. Along the frontier and in parts of the colonies affected by the Great Awakening, the intense qualities of seventeenth-century moral education survived. Evangelicals continued to employ rigorous approaches to childrearing and moral education, and they offered strong resistance to the seeming relaxation of standards by many other Americans. Newer groups of settlers, especially the pietistic sects in the middle colonies, also circumscribed the education of their young to protect them from what they perceived to be an erosion of Christian values. In short, moral education continued to exhibit an extraordinary variety of forms even as a new tone clearly became predominant.

Developments in higher education paralleled the changes taking place in the moral education of the masses of children. At Harvard, William & Mary, and some newly created institutions such as Yale, faculty and students often drifted away from religious orthodoxy. They showed a declining interest in the fine points of theology and a far greater interest in purely secular matters. At many of the largest and best established institutions, the ideas of the Enlightenment led to alterations in the curricula with courses in science and political thought taking a place alongside traditional offerings in theology and ethics.[10]

Some historians have illustrated the changing tone of higher education in the eighteenth century by examining the titles of commencement theses prepared by Harvard College students.[11] In the first half of the century, subjects tended to focus on the theological, as the following titles indicate:

> Is there an order of rank among the demons? (1714)
>
> When Balaam's ass spoke, was there any change in its organs? (1731)
>
> If Adam had remained in a state of innocence, would he have been translated into to heaven? (1741)

Later in the century, students were more concerned with matters of this world:

> Is a just government the only stable foundation of public peace? (1769)
>
> Is a government tyrannical in which the rulers consult their own interest more than that of their subjects? (1770)[12]

The drift toward secularization in higher education did not go unchallenged. Not only did religious denominations occasionally purge their colleges of unorthodox presidents and teachers, but evangelicals often created new colleges. Few of these institutions, however, survived to chal-

lenge the larger and more secular colleges. If they provided an important alternative for some students of that day, they had little influence on the major shifts in higher education in the eighteenth century.

By the time of the Revolution, the predominant tone of moral education at all levels was decidedly moderate. Although many dissenters of evangelical persuasion remained, prosperous and powerful Americans exhibited little of the anxiety characteristic of the seventeenth century. Confident in themselves and their communities, they embraced an approach to moral education that allowed the process to unfold slowly in a variety of formal and informal ways. In the end, they believed, strong communities of concerned adults would find the appropriate means to perpetuate the society's values and produce men and women of faith and virtue.

Chapter 1: NOTES

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6. "The Shorter Catechism, Agreed upon by the Reverend Assenbly of Divines at Westminster in England," in *The New England Primer* (Boston: Manning & Loring, 1883), 26.
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10. See Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (New York: Random House, 1962), ch. 1; John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of the American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), pt. 1; Richard Hofstadter, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), ch. 4; James Axtell, *The School upon a Hill: Education and Society in Colonial New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), ch. 6.
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CHAPTER 2

The Nineteenth-Century Revolution in Moral Education

2

The stability that gave eighteenth-century moral education its predominantly moderate tone began to disappear in the disruptions that accompanied and followed the American Revolution. The Revolution not only broke the calm of peaceable communities, it set into motion a whole series of changes that eventually challenged the most basic patterns of eighteenth-century life and laid the groundwork for a vast transformation of American society in the first fifty years of the nineteenth century.

The changes that transformed American life were the product of complex impulses. In the realms of politics, economics, and social relations, nineteenth-century Americans engaged in a vast quest for new freedom and opportunity. They democratized the society's politics and culture, opened western lands for settlement, developed new forms of enterprise, created burgeoning cities, and fashioned an array of new social arrangements. Taken together, these changes contributed to what Robert Wiebe has characterized as a dramatic opening of American society. Tight networks of traditional controls—stable hierarchical social structures, patterns of cultural and political deference, strong webs of extended kinships, and a close integration of family, church, business, and politics—weakened as images of peaceable kingdoms and orderly change gave way to visions of movement and opportunity.[1]

The quest for liberty, however, defined only one part of the transformation of American life. Even as nineteenth-century Americans worked to clear away the institutional restraints of colonial society, they moved in precisely the opposite direction in the realm of morals and personal behavior, abandoning the relaxed style of the eighteenth century in favor of an insistence on rigid self-restraint, rigorous moral purity, and a precise cultural conformity. Although the range of religious doctrines widened in these years, a distinctly evangelical temperament pervaded the society.

The combination of impulses toward freedom and moral rigidity was less a cultural contradiction than a reflection of the belief that the growing absence of external, institutional restraints required the development of strong internal controls. In the minds of nineteenth-century

Americans, the price of liberty was rigorous self-discipline and upright personal conduct.[2] Accordingly men and women of the day approached moral questions with an intensity that would have shocked Benjamin Franklin and his contemporaries.

This dual quest for liberty and self-restraint was strongest in the years between 1820 and 1865, an era when it was symbolized on the one hand by Jacksonian democracy and on the other by an array of crusades for moral reform. Both impulses weakened with the Civil War and Reconstruction, but the commitments forged in the earlier era continued to define the basic terms of American life well into the 1890s.

Social Change and the Transformation of Child-Rearing

The new intensity about morality manifested itself in a variety of dramatic ways—in the revival of evangelical Christianity, in the emergence of utopian and moral reform movements, and in the creation of an entirely new genre of moralistic sentimental literature. Change was also apparent in the more obscure efforts of countless families and communities to prepare their young for a life in the open, restless, and mobile society of the nineteenth century.

What most sharply differentiated the challenge of child rearing in this era was the need to prepare their young for a life away from home. No longer able to assume that their children would stay in their home communities where caring elders would nurture them into responsible adulthood, nineteenth-century Americans were forced to contemplate the possibility that youngsters would move away an early age, truncating the usual period of education and subjecting themselves to the temptations of the world with only strangers to provide support and guidance.

The growing tendency of youngsters to leave home was a part of a larger pattern of mobility that began in the years around the American Revolution. Not only did Americans begin to move more often, they began to move greater distances.[3] Most often they moved as families or groups of families, but increasingly children followed their own individual paths toward new opportunities, leaving behind the familiar surroundings and highly personal connections of their home communities.

Two forces were at work in the surge of mobility between the Revolution and Civil War. The first was an explosion of opportunities brought about by westward expansion, by economic growth, by the burgeoning of commercial cities, and by a process of democratization that opened avenues of advancement to social groups and classes that had never before dreamed of such possibilities. The second was a weakening of old attachments at home. Especially important in this process was a gradual decline in the family economy. The once-secure places for children on diversified family farms and in small businesses began to disappear as larger-scale manufacturing and commercial enterprises gained competitive advantage. Parents were less and less able to promise a permanent eco-

nomic niche for all their children, and the most insecure of them understood that their young would have to seek opportunity elsewhere.[4]

As young Americans began to pursue opportunities away from home, communities lost the capacity to educate their children slowly. Now if values were to be taught and behavior shaped, the task had to be accomplished well before the child could move beyond the protective environment of the home community into a world of strange people, restless activity, and alluring evils. Elders abandoned the relaxed attitudes of the pre-revolutionary era and developed approaches to moral education that were decidedly evangelical in tone.

Underlying the new anxiety about moral education was a widespread fear about what lay beyond the home community. Americans accustomed to centering their lives around familiar and stable local structures found it easy to think the worst about the world outside. Easterners heard and believed rumors that the frontier was place of instability, incivility, and violence. Small-town Americans thought even worse of cities, where drinking, gambling, whoring, and other kinds of immorality were reputed to be rife and where the tight personal restraints of community life were impossible. If youngsters found excitement in the opportunities of far away places, their elders were often more impressed by the dangers.

As Americans contemplated the prospect of sending their children into these dangerous worlds, they gave to moral education an urgency it had often lacked in the eighteenth century. They also gave it a quality of definition and systematization it had never had in the colonial period. Increasingly children acquired their values in common ways through agencies assigned special responsibility for their education.

The New Importance of Early Education

The most obvious dimension of this new definition was time. Once a task that extended well into adulthood, now moral education assumed the temporal limits of childhood itself. Even a remote chance that youngsters might leave home in their middle teens inclined anxious elders to assure that proper moral training was accomplished early, usually in the first twelve years of life. To fail in those years opened the possibility that children would forever lose the chance to learn the proper values. Parents and neighbors could be trusted to teach the right values and enforce the proper behaviors, but few nineteenth-century Americans believed that strangers in distant towns and cities would exhibit the same level of concern.

The importance of early moral education quickly became an article of faith in the early nineteenth century. "The germs of morality," wrote the public school champion Horace Mann, "must be planted in the moral nature of children, at an early period of their life." To fail in those critical years was to miss an opportunity unlikely to be recaptured except in the extraordinary environment of the penitentiary, the reformatory, or the asy-

lum. To succeed, on the other hand, was to equip the child to lead a life of virtue in a world full of temptations and relatively devoid of institutions capable of gently correcting wayward men and women. The goal of early moral training, wrote Mann, was to make the child like "those oaks" that "preserve their foliage fresh and green, through seasons of fiery drought, when all surrounding vegetation is scorched to a cinder."[5] Combining a faith in the malleability of the child with a pessimism about the reformability of adults, nineteenth-century Americans simply assumed that the alteration of early habits—good or bad—was "as little probable as that 'the Ethiopian should change his skin, or the leopard his spots.' "[6]

By imposing narrow temporal limits on moral education, Americans forced a sharpening of the lines of institutional responsibility as well. No longer could society afford the variegated patterns and informal methods of the more casual era before the Revolution. A process so urgent and so compressed by time required the intense, specialized efforts of designated agencies. Accordingly, nineteenth-century Americans made moral education the special responsibility of two institutions especially adaptable to the task of offering intensive training to the very young—the family and the school. "The most dangerous transition in a youth's life," declared one educator of the day,

> is that which carries him from the authoritative control of the family and the school to the responsibility of untried liberty. The shores of this perilous strait of human life are strewn with wrecked manhood. The home-life and the school-life of the child should prepare him for this transition to freedom by effective training in self-control and self-guidance, and, to this end, the will must be disciplined by an increasing use of motives that quicken the sense of right and make the conscience regal.[7]

Beyond the efforts of these two agencies, early nineteenth-century Americans found few institutional resources to guard against the ever-present temptations of an unstable world. Consequently, they placed extraordinary demands on both the family and the school, and, in the process, gave a sharp definition to the institutional context of moral education.

The Special Role of the Mother

By all standards, primary responsibility came to rest with the family. "Having ordained that man should receive his character from education," proclaimed one parents' guide of the 1830s, "it was ordained that early instruction should exert a decisive influence on character, and that during this important period of existence, children should be subject to the charge of their parents."[8] Responsibility for moral education was hardly new to the family, but in the colonial era it had been only one of many institutions involved in the task. If it failed, other agencies could be expected to assume the burden somewhere along the long line that stretched

from infancy to adulthood. Now, however, the family was singled out as the primary influence during the short years of childhood when character was formed. Its failure was often thought to mean a lifetime of moral failure for the child.

As the family assumed an ever-growing role in moral education, relationships and responsibilities within the family itself were dramatically transformed. During the colonial years fathers had shared an important place in moral education, often playing the dominant role in formal instructional activities. Now, as fathers increasingly worked away from home, primary responsibility for moral education came to fall on the shoulders of the mother, the member of the family who had the closest and most continuous associations with the child during the critical formative years.

The special role of the mother came to be highly celebrated in the nineteenth century. Ladies magazines, popular literature, and a wide range of childrearing manuals both proclaimed the duties of the mother and offered a wealth of advice about how to insure the proper education of their children. "By the plan of creation and the providence of God," declared Dr. Daniel Drake, a Cincinnati physician and popular speaker on domestic education, "it is the peculiar duty of the mother, to watch over her child for many of the first years of its life, and on her more than the father rests the responsibility."[9] In the mother's hands, warned Samuel Goodrich, author of children's literature and parents' manuals, lay the greatest power for shaping the character of the child:

> You have a child on your knee. Listen a moment. Do you know what that child is? It is an immortal being, destined to live forever! It is destined to be happy or miserable! And who is to make it happy or miserable? You—the mother! You who gave it birth, the mother of its body, are also the mother of its soul for good or for ill. Its character is yet undecided; its destiny is placed in your hands. That child may be a liar. You can prevent it. It may be a drunkard. You can prevent it. It may be a thief. You can prevent it. It may be a murderer. You can prevent it . . . It may descend into the grave with an evil memory behind and dread before. You can prevent it. Yes, you, the mother can prevent all these things. Will you, or will you not?[10]

Such rhetoric placed a heavy burden on mothers, giving them at once new powers in the domestic realm and extraordinary responsibilities for a task that had once been broadly shared by a variety of people within the society. As mothers went about their new duties, they did much to establish the moral standing of their families in the community. By extension women, more than men, were recognized as moral leaders within communities. Gradually morality came to have about it a subtle feminine cast, while the world of business was identified more sharply as a rough and tumble masculine world.

Mothers were expected to go about the task of moral education by exhibiting a constant Christian virtue in their own lives and through daily readings and exhortations to children designed to increase piety and teach

proper conduct. Unlike evangelicals of the colonial era, nineteenth-century mothers tended to view their children as neither inherently good nor inherently evil, but rather as malleable, and they worked less to break the wills of their young than to cultivate by example and instruction a powerful inner desire for virtuous living. Consequently they were expected to be gentle and cheerful and to create strong associations between virtue and happiness.[11]

Mothers gradually abandoned the catechetical approaches so common in the colonial era, paying less attention to fine theological distinctions than to general moral rules. Given the length of time available to them and the enormity of their task, the inculcation of simple moral truths and the shaping of a powerful conscience seemed more important than a careful schooling in the intricacies of doctrine. What counted in a world where children would grow up to face temptations without the support of traditional networks of families and friends was a certain simple strength of character, a powerful commitment to basic values that would allow them to make sharp distinctions between good and evil and to steer a virtuous course through a rough and tumble age.

To teach these simple values, mothers turned to a vast new literature written explicitly for children. Formal moral instruction in the home consisted most often of mothers reading to children from such popular books as T.H. Gallaudet's *Child's Book of the Soul*, Lydia Sigourney's *The Boys Book*, or the celebrated stories of Peter Parley (Samuel G. Goodrich). Combined with Bible-reading and Sunday School tracts, these works provided a rich curriculum for the early moral education of nineteenth-century children.[12]

Mothers focused almost exclusively on moral instruction, giving little attention to the intellectual. Sharing a widespread nineteenth-century view, they feared that precocious intellectual activity could both damage physical health and warp emotional and spiritual development. If children happened to learn the rudiments of reading or even the alphabet, that was likely a by-product rather than the object of maternal instruction. Literacy had not lost its importance—indeed the ability to read the moralistic literature of the day was thought to be essential in keeping alive the lessons of childhood—but parents were increasingly willing to entrust reading instruction to the schools when children were at a more appropriate age for intellectual activity.[13]

Moral Education and the Growth of Schools

Although the role of the mother in moral education was always primary in the nineteenth century, Americans never placed the entire burden on her shoulders. They expected schools—both Sunday schools and daily schools—to extend and reinforce the moral education of the home as they taught children elementary skills of literacy and numeracy. Indeed the growing importance of formal educational institutions for the young in the

period after the Revolution may be attributed in large part to the need for agencies that could offer intensive training during the critical formative years.

The Sunday School. The emergence of the Sunday School was one important indication of the quest for formal agencies to assist parents in the task of moral education. Imported from England in the 1790s, the Sunday School initially served as an agency to instruct poor children in eastern cities, teaching them reading and writing as well moral values. Under the influence of a wave of evangelicalism in the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, it came to focus more narrowly on moral education and to open its doors to children of all backgrounds. In this form it became popular among Protestants of all social classes and grew rapidly across the country, in rural areas as well as in cities.[14]

The Common School. As much as Protestant Americans of the nineteenth century valued the Sunday School, they never believed that it could serve as more than an adjunct in the task of moral education. One day a week was simply too little time to give to a process that required constant and intensive effort. Thus, it was the common daily school that Americans called upon to provide primary support for the early educational efforts of the family.

Colonial Americans had supported schools only sporadically, giving to them a somewhat marginal place in the education of the masses of children. After the Revolution, however, enrollments increased dramatically, and the school acquired a distinct and important place in an increasingly standardized pattern of moral education. In the eighteenth century, the school had served a relatively small clientele who often stretched an elementary education over ten to fifteen years, sometimes in classrooms that mixed six-year-olds with eighteen-year-olds. By the midnineteenth century, the school was expected to enroll the vast majority of children and provide them with early, systematic, and intensive moral instruction. Now a process of moral education that normally began at the mothers knee during the first six years of life routinely continued in the school for another three to four years.[15]

The Public School System. In the years between the 1780s and the early 1830s, parents sent their children to a hodge-podge of denominational, charity, public, and private fee schools. Because these schools were not a part of bureaucratic structures and often kept few records, scholars know much less about them than about the state school systems that began to replace them in the 1830s. What is known, however, suggests that these schools responded directly to the growing need for an early moral education. They offered an increasingly compact and intensive training to a clientele almost exclusively made up of young children, who instead of drifting in and out of school as had been the pre-revolutionary custom, now completed their classroom work in consecutive terms, usually before they had reached their teenage years.[16]

Between the 1830s and 1860s, public schools became the preferred institutions for most Americans, and state systems expanded rapidly. The growing preference for public schools was rooted in the social and political transformations of the day. Because the public school brought children of all social stations into a common classroom, many saw it as a powerful democratizing force—a logical extension of democratic tendencies in politics and culture. Others expected it to ease social tensions by increasing opportunities and promoting a common culture.

Crucible of Character: The Common School Classroom

Although the public school softened denominational influences on education, it emphasized moral training every bit as much as the most sectarian of private schools. Even when nineteenth-century Americans defined the goals of public schooling in political or economic terms, they invariably accepted moral education as the proper means to achieve their ends. In this society so free of institutional restraints, moral training seemed equally important to the creation of the diligent worker, the responsible citizen, and the man or woman of virtue. The centrality of moral education remained an article of faith from the creation of the public school system in the 1830s until the last decade of the century.

The Preference for Women Teachers. Nothing revealed the importance of moral education in the public school so clearly as the overwhelming preference for women teachers. Women were the acknowledged experts in moral training in the nineteenth century, and most Americans insisted that, when possible, they teach the early grades of public schooling. "A great part already, and it is hoped that a greater part hereafter, of the business of instruction in schools," declared Boston educator George B. Emerson, "must be performed by females. Everything indicated the natural adaptation of the female character to this vocation."[17]

Across the country, churches, missionary societies, and organizations of reformers enlisted women in a vast crusade to provide the school with proper teachers. One group alone, the National Board of Popular Education, sent nearly six hundred single women to the West to ensure that children in these newly settled territories had access to a proper Christian culture. Other groups sponsored a similar foray into the South as a part of the effort to reconstruct that region after the Civil War.[18]

What qualified particular women for teaching positions was their character and reputation rather than any special training or even their general level of education. Although school leaders constantly tried to upgrade the pedagogical skills of teachers, even tough-minded reformers were willing to forgive a woman "her ignorance of syntax and low level of scholarship" if she had "common sense and a good heart."[19]

The primary task of the woman in the classroom was to exercise a strong moral influence on the child, reinforcing the lessons of the mother

by both serving as a model and eliciting proper behavior from the child. The stakes were widely acknowledged to be high. "Instructors not only form a character for this world and one that will be estimated by men," wrote one educator, "but likewise a character for eternity, and one that will be estimated by a holy and righteous God."[20] Like the mother herself, the teacher of the nineteenth century carried a heavy burden of moral responsibility.

As models, teachers were expected to exhibit virtue in and outside the classroom. Always subject to a severe public scrutiny, they had little privacy and virtually no latitude for mistakes in moral judgment. They were almost invariably single or widowed, since married women of virtue were generally expected to confine their work to the home. In many communities, teachers boarded with various respectable families, both as a way to save their spare earnings and to protect their reputations.

In the daily routines of the classroom, teachers paid special attention to the behavior of their children, carefully encouraging good habits and punishing the bad ones. Here their efforts were heavily informed by the faculty psychology so popular from the 1820s to the 1890s. That psychology viewed the human mind as a collection of certain faculties and tendencies (moral and emotional as well as intellectual) that could be strengthened by exercise. Following the logic of faculty psychology, teachers worked hard to elicit and reward self-restraint, industry, honesty, kindness, punctuality, and orderliness and to discourage slovenliness, inattention, dishonesty, and unkindness.

In shaping the behavior of their students, teachers were far more likely to depend on gentle encouragement than on harsh penalties. Although the rod was hardly unknown in classrooms of the day, teachers resorted to it only when other approaches failed. The aim of their classroom activities was not to preserve an orderly learning environment, but rather to win student assent to certain values, to cultivate in the young minds a love of virtue, and to develop moral commitments that would last a lifetime. To impose severe external restraints in the classroom was hardly an adequate preparation for a life in which virtuous behavior was seen as the product of powerful internal controls.

The Textbook: Repository of Truth. The task of guiding the behavior of children required of teachers an extraordinary combination of skill, persistence, patience, and understanding. Academic instruction, however, depended less on the efforts of the teacher than on textbooks, which occupied a place of central importance in the nineteenth-century classroom. What gave textbooks such preeminence was the sense that they conveyed simply and forcefully the universal truths that underlay morality. Such truths required little explanation and few glosses. If teachers could assure that textbooks were read, the texts themselves would provide the proper moral instruction.

Moral lessons suffused nineteenth-century textbooks—not just readers, but spellers and arithmetic books as well. Early exercises empha-

sized "carefully chosen maxims and selections" meant to be "committed to memory and deeply engraved by frequent repetition." More advanced students learned of the alluring disguises of temptation and the dangers of straying from the paths of virtue by reading ever more complicated "stories selected for the lesson they teach and talked over in such a way to develop the moral judgment in applying familiar principles."[21]

The values themselves were a blend of traditional Protestant morality and nineteenth century conceptions of good citizenship. Textbooks taught "love of country, love of God, duty to parents, the necessity to develop habits of thrift, honesty, and hard work in order to accumulate property, the certainty of progress [and] the perfection of the United States."[22] Famous spellers and readers, like those of Noah Webster and William Holmes McGuffey, warned ominously of the dangers of drunkenness, luxury, self-pride, and deception and promised handsome earthly rewards for courage, honesty, and respect for others.

A story in *McGuffey's Third Eclectic Reader* was typical of the genre. It told the tale of two boys, Charlie and Rob, discussing their futures while performing their chores of chopping wood. Charlie hated the task and sought to find easier ways to the riches he dreamed of. Rob on the other hand learned from the challenge and worked at other laborious tasks as well. He was not averse to the idea of becoming rich himself, but he did not intend to shirk his duties in the meantime, even if Charlie chose to laugh at him. The moral became clear in the rhetorical question that brought the story to an end: "Now which of these boys, do you think, grew up to be a rich and useful man, and which of them joined a party of tramps before he was thirty?"[23]

Morality, Self-Restraint, and Good Citizenship. Although the values in this and other popular schoolbooks had been familiar for generations, nineteenth-century Americans gave them a peculiarly rigid quality. Fearful that the absence of external restraints would allow a single deviation to grow unchecked into a pattern of wickedness, they painted good and evil in stark, absolute terms and left no gray areas in their moral education—no room for interpretation, no flexibility to apply values as shifting contingencies might dictate. Only absolute rules rigidly adhered to, they believed, could provide a reliable guide to behavior and protect against the enormous temptations of the day.

From a modern perspective, the early moral education of nineteenth-century child may be characterized as an effort to create what David Riesman has labelled "the inner-directed man," that is a person who when confronted with a moral dilemma is less guided by tradition or the opinion of others than by values internalized at an early age.[24] In Freudian terms, nineteenth-century moral education created powerful super-egos that almost reflexively recoiled from familiar temptation. In the language of the nineteenth-century Americans themselves, the effort was to develop powerful consciences. As educator Horace Mann put it, the goal of moral education was to:

> build up a partition wall—a barrier—so thick and high, between the principles of right and wrong, in the minds of men, that the future citizens will not overleap or break through it. A truly conscientious man, whatever may be his desire, his temptation, his appetite, the moment he approaches the boundary line which separates right from wrong, beholds an obstruction—a barrier—more impassable than a Chinese wall. He could sooner leap the ocean, than transgress it.[25]

Moral education so pervaded the classrooms of elementary schools in the nineteenth century that there was little time for instruction in government or politics. Textbooks of the day encouraged patriotism and obedience to the law but gave remarkably little attention to national heroes or political traditions. When the names of prominent statesmen were evoked, the aim was more often to illuminate a moral truth than to exalt the nation's history. Thus, George Washington came to be better known for his honesty than for his political or military skill.

The neglect of government and politics was far from a sign of nonchalance about citizenship, however. Rather it reflected the peculiar nineteenth-century conception of good citizenship. Americans of that day believed that the key to the good of the society lay less in structures of government or in political beliefs than in the morality of common citizens. In a land of liberty, a land of relatively weak governmental structures, the morality of the individual citizen held out the best hope for the preservation of freedom, the protection of order, and the growth of prosperity. As one educator told an audience of western academicians in 1837: "Sceptered hands, a powerful aristocracy, military force, an omnipresent police—these are the means of preserving peace and order among other nations of the earth. But here they have no place. We are necessarily self-governed, and therefore the absence of these external physical restraints must be supplied by a universal infusion of moral principles."[26]

The nineteenth-century tendency to place personal moral conduct at the core of their hopes for social stability and political liberty gave to the common school a significance it had never had before. Not only did parents send their children in unprecedented numbers, but taxpayers with surprisingly little dissent paid handsome sums to support public schools that gradually eliminated tuition fees and made elementary education widely accessible to children of all social stations.

Beyond the Early Years

Given common assumptions about the importance of early moral education, it is no surprise that elementary schools constituted the core of the public school system. By the Civil War, 85 to 90 percent of Massachusetts children between the ages of seven and thirteen were enrolled in school, and enrollment rates in many other states approached those levels.[27] The overwhelming majority of these children were in elementary schools. Although precise statistics are not available, probably no

more than 10 percent of the eligible population attended academies, high schools, or colleges. Nor in fact did Americans attribute great political or cultural significance to advanced education. In an age when character was thought to be shaped in the early years, elementary schools were the primary beneficiaries of public support for education.

The conviction that elementary schools played the essential role in moral education freed secondary schools and colleges to offer a broader and more utilitarian curriculum than they had in the eighteenth century. Increasingly Americans associated education at these levels with occupational and social success rather than with cultural coherence or political stability. Yet, even a society that believed in the early formation of character did not relieve these higher educational institutions entirely of responsibility for moral education. Like other institutions in the society, they were influenced by the waves of Protestant evangelicalism, piety, and moralism that were so central to nineteenth-century American society, and they were expected to exercise a careful supervision over the behavior of their students, thereby systematically reinforcing the moral lessons of childhood.

The work of academies and high schools in the nineteenth century varied enormously. Some institutions offered curricula little different from the colleges, others continued slightly modified versions of the classical studies of the Latin Grammar school, and still others—a growing number as the century progressed—offered a broad range of courses, including some decidedly utilitarian subjects. Elite academies, like the colleges they competed with, sometimes included courses in ethics and moral philosophy, but most secondary institutions provided no formal moral training. If textbooks continued to reflect the familiar values, they did so in a less insistent way. Character, of course, was a matter of concern for educators at every level, but the daily routines of secondary schools focused primarily on the practical tasks of preparing for college or career. Except where private institutions were sponsored by churches, secondary schools rarely provided systematic religious instruction even of a nondenominational sort.

Colleges were more often tied to specific religious denominations, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century, and they continued to offer formal religious and moral instruction. Although some of the great colonial colleges had drifted away from orthodoxy, many of the newly founded institutions of the day had been created specifically to promote the cause of one sect or another, and to provide it with ministers, missionaries, and a measure of status. Reversing the secular drift of eighteenth-century colleges, these institutions injected a heavy dose of piety back into higher education, bringing it into line with the evangelistic and moralistic tenor of the times.[28]

Moral education appeared in a variety of places in the college curriculum, but formal instruction was most systematic in the course in moral philosophy, a virtually universal offering in the nineteenth-century colleges. Moral philosophy was often the capstone course in the curriculum,

and the men who taught it (including some college presidents) occupied a place of unique standing among nineteenth-century academics.

During the antebellum years courses in moral philosophy were remarkably comprehensive offerings that sought to bring Christian ethics to bear on an array of personal and social matters ranging from proper family relationships to issues in criminal justice. Heavily influenced by Scottish common sense realism, moral philosophers of the day posited the existence of a moral sense accessible to all people and emphasized the duty of individuals to adhere to basic moral principles. Unlike their predecessors of the Enlightenment era, they gave relatively little attention to the role of prudence in moral decision-making, virtually ignoring the calculation of consequences as a part of the moral act. Instead they emphasized the importance of intention and reinforced the popular tendency to view morality as a matter of bringing the will into conformity with absolute and universal moral rules.[29]

By embracing Scottish common-sense realism, American moral philosophers gave intellectual authority to the two primary thrusts in antebellum culture—the quest for liberty in economic and political realms, and the emphasis on restraint and inner controls in morality. Little in their teaching gave students a critical perspective from which they might have challenged the classical liberal state or softened the rigid morality of the day. When students sought access to other intellectual traditions, they had to go beyond the usual offerings of the classroom, often buying their own books and even creating their own student-run libraries which could be fully stocked with Enlightenment texts.

Occasional student protest notwithstanding, colleges attempted to reinforce the formal instruction of the moral philosophy courses with a carefully controlled extracurricular life. College builders of the day deliberately chose small-town locations as a way to protect students from the lures of big cities and often housed students in dormitories where their behavior could be closely supervised. Members of the faculty attended to the moral development of their charges as much as to their intellectual growth. If students sometimes revolted against this piety, as they did when they formed literary societies or social fraternities, they were also capable of reinforcing it, as the countless campus religious revivals of the day attest.[30]

Although both secondary schools and colleges offered some opportunity for dissent, or at least nonconcern, the antebellum era was remarkable for the extent to which a uniform approach to morality prevailed up and down the largely Protestant educational ladder. In the eighteenth century, colleges had often been hostile to orthodoxy and had sometimes encouraged students to reexamine cherished beliefs. This would be the case again in the late nineteenth century when science began to raise new questions about conventional beliefs, but in the antebellum years, the college experience only reinforced the basic values that children had first learned at their mothers' knees.

Consensus and Conflict

The congruity of moral philosophy with common conceptions of morality gave a strong sense of certainty about moral questions to many Americans. Uniformity across the levels of education, however, fell far short of reflecting a consensus on either the form or content of moral education, for despite the universalistic goals of many educational leaders, both public schools and antebellum colleges were primarily Protestant institutions in a society with a small, but growing Catholic population. Catholics and Protestants had wide areas of agreement on what constituted a proper moral education, but they differed sharply on a critical issue, namely the place of religion in moral instruction. In an age when virtually everyone believed that morality should be rooted in faith, differences on the place of religion was inevitably divisive, and in the antebellum era the differences created one of the fiercest and most enduring conflicts in American history. It is this conflict and other disputes about the place of religion in moral education that constitute the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2: NOTES

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Chapter 3

Religion and Moral Education: American Configurations

3

As Americans of the nineteenth century grappled with the problem of moral education, they made a fateful decision about schools. Instead of following the path of most European countries and building on a long tradition of state support for religious education, they undertook the construction of a vast new system of nonsectarian public schooling. The aim was not to forbid religion in the classroom, but rather to teach a nonsectarian Christianity at public expense, leaving to other institutions the responsibility for instruction in the fine points of theological doctrine. A response to the diversity of the society, nonsectarian schooling was an effort to find a common ground in moral education, thereby enhancing cohesion while protecting the rights of particular denominations to preserve their special doctrinal truths.

The movement to establish nonsectarian schooling had its roots in a variety of religious, cultural, and political impulses of the early nineteenth century. From the first, it was a thoroughly Protestant campaign. It drew heavily on Protestant social thought and Protestant modes of organization, and it recruited a disproportionate number of its leaders from the Protestant clergy. Moved at first by their own internal divisions and later by fears of a growing Catholic presence, Protestants saw in public education a chance to put the stamp of their own values on the entire society.

This quest for Protestant hegemony drew strength from a more generalized fear of disorder and faction in the first half of the nineteenth century. The social and political disruptions that accompanied democratization, the westward movement, and the breakdown of the family economy provided a background of anxiety against which the quest for a nonsectarian schooling took place. The same forces that led families to develop new concerns about the moral well-being of their children in these years led communities to rally to the support of a nonsectarian public schooling that would serve as a common meeting-ground for all white children regardless of background. The public school would be, in the words of Horace Mann, "one institution, at least, which shall be spared from the ravages of the spirit of party, one spot in the wide land unblasted by the fiery

breath of animosity . . . one rallying-point for a peaceful and harmonious co-operation and fellowship."[1]

The Roots of Nonsectarianism in American Life

The notion that nonsectarianism offered hope for both the spread of the Christian faith and the achievement of social harmony was forged during the Second Great Awakening, the series of revivals that swept across the country in the early decades of the nineteenth century. These revivals produced paradoxical results. On the one hand, they created divisions within many traditional denominations, furthering a process of splintering that had long been a part of Protestantism. On the other hand, they tended to soften the lines between sects by emphasizing a religion of the heart that devalued formal creeds and weakened the hold of orthodoxies. Moreover, they encouraged the creation of a network of nondenominational societies designed to hasten the spread of the gospel and give new energy to the work of Christian mission. Thus such groups as the American Bible Society and the American Home Missionary Society brought together evangelical Protestants from a wide range of denominations in an effort to spread revival and Christian nurture across the land. Eventually the soldiers in these various crusades began to think of themselves not simply as Presbyterians or Methodists, but also as a part of a great pan-Protestant moral empire, an empire they found increasingly easy to identify with America itself.[2]

The interdenominational approach to religious revival that developed during the Second Great Awakening became a widely copied model for a whole array of moral and social reform movements during the years before the Civil War. Whether they were campaigning against slavery or for temperance, reformers of the early and mid-nineteenth century worked less through their particular church denominations or political parties than through broad nonsectarian societies. Like the evangelicals, they believed that success required them to subordinate their doctrinal differences in the interest of spreading common truths, achieving reform, and promoting social harmony.

Although the bias toward nonsectarianism exhibited in these moral crusades was never universal among Protestants, the idea had a powerful influence among a substantial majority, and its hold on the culture grew throughout the century. In important respects, nonsectarianism was an early form of American pluralism, and it operated in the daily life of communities as well as in the great religious and reform movements of the day. In towns and neighborhoods where relatively homogeneous religious communities had been split by the revivals of the Great Awakening, nonsectarianism allowed Americans to sustain a level of social cohesion even as they nourished a measure of religious diversity. In their public activities, men and women emphasized their commitment to the common tenets of Christian faith; in the more private spheres of family and church, they con-

tinued to confess their particular versions of religious doctrine. Thus, where communities were divided on such theological issues as original sin or infant baptism, they were careful to muffle the public expression of their differences and to proclaim instead their common faith in the ten commandments, the golden rule, and the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.

It was out of this culture that nineteenth-century Americans gradually shaped an approach to moral education that was meant both to create a strong consensus on Christian values and to preserve the rights of individuals to hold to their particular sectarian doctrines. The public school was to be the primary expression of this approach, but a transformed Sunday school was also an integral part of the scheme. Viewed broadly the goal of reformers was to teach children universal moral values and a generalized Protestant religion in the public school while reserving to the home and the Sunday school the task of inculcating the special doctrines of their particular faiths.

The Complementary Roles of Public Schools and Sunday Schools

The fundamental premise of this approach was that moral education could be rooted in a generalized set of Christian values without aggravating sectarian differences. "There are," declared Heman Humphrey, the president of Amherst College and one of the great champions of nonsectarian schooling, "certain moral and religious principles, in which all denominations are agreed, such as the Ten Commandments, our Saviour's Golden Rule, everything, in short, which lies within the whole range of duty to God and duty to our fellow man."[3] The task of the school was simply to teach these Christian truths without involving itself in specific doctrinal disputes. "Let the grown people be trinitarians and unitarians, Catholics and Protestants," exhorted one reformer, "be content to let the children be Christians."[4]

The linchpin of this nonsectarian strategy was the practice of reading the Bible in schools without offering any interpretation or gloss. To read the Bible without comment was to invoke an authority that no Protestant could dispute, without at the same time taking a stand on any of the issues that set denominations against one another. As Heman Humphrey put it, the advantage of Bible-reading over other forms of religious instruction was "that every denomination believes so far as it differs from the rest that the Bible is on its side, and, of course, the more it is read by all the better." To object to Bible-reading was "to confess that I had not full confidence in my own creed and was afraid it would not bear a scriptural test."[5]

The presence of the Bible in the schools became a powerful symbol of the connections between religion and morality, and Protestants resisted any effort to remove it. Moreover, where denominational sensitivities allowed, public school educators also encouraged prayer, hymn-singing,

and other religious exercises. Yet, despite the presence of religion, most moral education focused on values that required little theological sanction, values such as honesty, industry, thrift, and kindness. Because the aim was to heal divisions and subordinate differences, the public school inevitably emphasized those parts of the culture that enjoyed the support of a broad consensus and avoided issues that divided one sect or party from another.

As public schools came to be the primary institutional custodians of nonsectarian approaches to moral education, the Sunday School moved in precisely the opposite direction, abandoning the broad interdenominational effort to bring Christian discipline and discipleship to the working classes and becoming instead an adjunct to particular churches, serving as the vehicle through which the special doctrinal truths of the denominations were passed along to children. With public schools increasingly teaching literacy and morality to children of all social stations, Sunday schools were free to offer an explicitly religious education, one that emphasized the very doctrines that were forbidden in state-supported institutions.[6]

Most Protestants clearly understood the roles of the public school and the Sunday school as complementary. Together, these two institutions seemed to offer an ideal way to preserve social harmony while nurturing at least a narrow range of religious diversity. Characteristically the scheme allowed Americans to emphasize their commonness in the public setting of the nonsectarian school while confining their doctrinal differences to the relatively private spheres of church and home.

Not all Protestants, to be sure, were comfortable with this particular division of labor in moral education. Some pietistic sects spurned formal education altogether, and others insisted on educating children in their own carefully supervised schools. Even some mainline Protestants were initially skeptical of nonsectarian schools. By the middle of the century, however, the vast majority of Protestants had accepted the new arrangement, content to separate the general moral education offered in the public school from the religious training provided by family, church, and Sunday school.

Toward a Bifurcated System

The Catholic "Problem." The combination of nonsectarian public schooling and denominational Sunday schooling was in many respects an ingenious solution to the problem of religious diversity among Protestants. Yet, at the very time that many Americans thought that they had resolved the problems of moral education in a religiously diverse society, a growing Catholic population created a new challenge, one that could not be met by simply applying the Protestant scheme to a wider group of actors.

Many of the earliest public school supporters gave little apparent thought to the challenge presented by the Catholic presence. Obsessed by the need to shore up Protestant unity and mission, they made no provision to accommodate the then relatively small Catholic population. Other

reformers were more sensitive, however, and their concern became widespread in the 1840s and 1850s as the Catholic population began a period of explosive growth. By mid-century, neither educational leaders nor public school supporters could ignore the matter, and a range of responses emerged.

The most generous of school reformers, such as Horace Mann, hoped to attract Catholics to the public school. Their vision of social cohesion required that all children regardless of background should be schooled in common values, and they pressed to make the public school a broadly inclusive institution. To exclude Catholics, they feared, was not simply to aggravate sectarian hostilities, but also to alienate working and immigrant classes, many of whom were Catholic. To exclude workers and immigrants was to weaken the school's power to serve as a cohesive force in the society and to increase the prospect that the children of the "dangerous classes" would grow up undisciplined, illiterate, and a threat to the stability of the society. "It is," declared Cincinnati educator Calvin E. Stowe, "no longer a mere question of benevolence, of duty, or of enlightened self-interest, but the intellectual and religious training of our foreign population has become essential to our own safety; we are prompted to it by the instinct of self-preservation."[7]

These reformers, even when they harbored anti-Catholic immigrant feelings of their own, sought to soften the nativist imp[ulse] the public school movement and to make compromises that would attr[act] Catholics to the schools. Horace Mann, for example, admonished his Protestant supporters that teaching creeds offensive to immigrants might result in excluding more than half of the children of Boston from the schools. Reformers in Ohio joined with immigrants to secure legislation that allowed public schools in German districts to teach the native language as well as English. A few educators even took the extraordinary step of suggesting that both Catholic (Douay) and Protestant (King James) translations of the Bible be read in the classroom.[8] In proposing such compromises, these reformers often went beyond their more cautious colleagues and far beyond many of their constituents, who were unwilling to accept immigrants and Catholics into public schools on anything other than strict assimilationist terms. In fact, some natives were not enthusiastic about attracting these outsiders at all. Instead, they viewed public education as a way for their children to maintain a differential advantage over immigrants and resisted reformist schemes that might bring their potential competitors into the school. The need of these natives for status and material gain simply outweighed their commitment to commonality and cohesion, and their opposition did much to thwart the effort of reformers who sought to make the public school an inclusive institution.

Differences among Protestants on the Catholic issue were reflected in actual educational practice. In a few places educators made accommodations, employing some Catholic teachers, allowing scripture reading from the Douay version of the Bible, and screening textbooks for material offen-

sive to Catholics. More often, however, schools exhibited an unyielding commitment to Protestant practices. Many common textbooks of the day were virulently anti-Catholic, and many others contained subtle condemnations of both immigrants and Catholics. Teachers continued to read primarily from the Protestant version of the Bible, and religious exercises in the schools retained a distinctly Protestant cast. Only in a few scattered cities and towns could nineteenth-century Catholics have found anything but hostility and insensitivity in the public schools.

Catholic Traditions in Moral Education. Initial Catholic criticism of nonsectarian public schooling focused on the most obvious and offensive abuses, a fact that led some Protestant educators to underestimate just how fundamental Catholic opposition to nonsectarian moral education really was. In fact, Catholics found the notion of nonsectarian moral education deeply at odds with their own doctrines and traditions, and even a cleaning up of offensive Protestant textbooks would not likely have made the public school an appealing place for them.

As F. Michael Perko has pointed out, nineteenth-century Catholicism was a deeply traditional religion with fundamental presuppositions that were radically different from the Protestant world view. Unlike Protestants, Catholics associated individual salvation less with personal conversion or upright behavior than with participation in the rich sacramental life of the church. Moreover, they were reluctant to confine the authority of the church to narrow spheres, to separate the sacred from the civil, to draw lines between public and private domains, or to make sharp distinctions between universally acceptable truths and the doctrinal beliefs of particular denominations.[9]

In the realm of education, most Catholics ascribed primary responsibility to the family and the church and were reluctant to acknowledge an autonomous role for the state, preferring instead a scheme that would give public support for private educational efforts. They criticized the public school because it seemed to them only a faintly disguised Protestant enterprise yet were never able to envision clearly an alternative approach to nonsectarian schooling that would satisfy their own needs. The habit of connecting moral education to their specific traditions was simply too deep. Unlike Protestants who had devalued doctrine as they spread a religion of the heart, Catholics continued to emphasize the catechism as the beginning point for moral education, and they found it difficult to imagine a schooling devoid of elementary doctrinal instruction.

Bible-reading offered no way out of this dilemma for Catholics. They were accustomed to studying the scriptures only in light of other teachings of the church, and the Protestant habit of letting the Bible speak for itself was entirely alien to their tradition. In their view, scripture-reading unaccompanied by other instruction revealed only partial truths. Thus even the use of the Douay Bible in the public school classroom, while an encouraging sign of Protestant tolerance, was not enough to meet the highest Catholic standards for the integration of moral and religious education.

The Failure of Compromise. Despite the profound differences in their traditions, Catholics and Protestants of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries made repeated and frequently heroic attempts to compromise on the question of moral education. Some public school leaders were willing to allow the reading of the Douay Bible or even to release students for religious instruction in order to lure Catholics into the schools. Many Catholic families for their part sent their children to public schools, often in defiance of church authorities, and a number of Catholic clergy sought to create schemes that would have allowed Catholic religious instruction within a publicly controlled and financed system.

Such efforts at compromise produced many local successes. In the 1830s, for example, the public system of Lowell, Massachusetts, incorporated two previously Catholic schools with the understanding that it would continue to employ Catholic teachers and exclude textbooks offensive to Catholics. In this case, the school board had full authority to inspect and control schools, to hire teachers, and to determine curriculum. It succeeded in retaining Catholic support because it used its authority to protect diversity rather than to impose a single approach to moral education across the system.[10] In other cities, the option of using the Douay translation of the Bible was enough to attract Catholic children, at least for short periods.

Accommodations of this sort, though frequent throughout the nineteenth and even the twentieth century, never pointed to a general resolution of the differences between Catholics and Protestants on the question of moral education. Not only were fundamental religious and ideological differences great, they were complicated by nativism among Protestants and by the efforts of ethnic Catholics to use education as a way of preserving the cultures of their homelands. If some people on both sides continued to seek common ground, many others insisted on a schooling that reflected their particular traditions. In the end, difference triumphed and American education became divided between a public system that offered a nonsectarian schooling to the vast majority of children and several parochial systems that continued to combine religion and moral education in ways that particular denominations demanded. Of these parochial systems, the Catholic was by far the largest.

Origins of the Catholic Parochial System. Sharp differences between Catholics and Protestants emerged soon after the campaign for nonsectarian schooling scored its impressive early gains. Tensions erupted first in New York in the early 1840s. There Bishop John Hughes of New York City sought public funds to support Catholic schools, arguing that moneys distributed by the New York Public School Society effectively supported Protestant schools. Although Hughes was able to win the support of Governor William H. Seward, alarmed Protestants persuaded the state legislature to restrict aid to nonsectarian schools. Since the legislature subsequently authorized Bible-reading in the classroom, the state had effectively elevated the Protestant approach to moral education into public policy. Hughes responded by encouraging Catholic parishes to create their own

schools and Catholic parents to provide a specifically Catholic education for their children.

Similar public policy in Pennsylvania evoked an even sharper response and led to a violent confrontation between Catholics and Protestants. Operating under an 1838 law that required that scriptures be used in the teaching of reading, Philadelphia schools in 1842 fired a teacher for refusing to read from the King James Bible and spanked a child for the same offense. After Catholic protests, the school board made some symbolic compromises (allowing children to read from preferred translations "without notes or comments"—a phrase that technically eliminated the Douay version). Nativists, however, were in no mood to compromise, even symbolically, and they began to march through Catholic districts of the city in protest during the summer of 1844. The result was a series of violent confrontations that resulted in hundreds of casualties, including more than forty deaths. Only the use of troops finally curtailed the fighting.[11]

The events of New York and Philadelphia were enough to sober early Catholic hopes for some accommodation with the public school. Moreover they were followed by a decade and a half of increasingly vicious nativism that hardened positions on both sides of the debate about religion and education. By the late 1840s, a growing number of Catholics had despaired of finding a place within a publicly financed system of schooling. Gradually a variety of local initiatives to create parochial schools coalesced into a broad national effort to fashion a distinct Catholic system of education.

The national scope of the movement to create a Catholic system became evident at the First Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1852. Here, bishops from across the United States resolved that parishes should create their own schools. Perhaps still nourishing the hope for state aid, the bishops left vague the question of how such schools should be financed but urged the parishes themselves to assume final responsibility for support of the system.

What was purely voluntary after the decrees of the First Plenary Council became mandatory during the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884. This national gathering of American bishops ordered all parishes to establish schools within two years and outlined penalties for priests and congregations who failed to do so without adequate cause. Moreover, it decreed "that all Catholic parents are bound to send their children to the parish school, unless it is evident that a sufficient training in religion is given either in their own homes, or in other Catholic schools; or when because of a sufficient reason, approved by the bishop, with all due precautions and safeguards, it is licit to send them to other schools."[12]

By the end of the nineteenth century the Catholic school system was firmly entrenched in virtually every part of the country, and it was clear to even the most ardent public school leaders that the grand vision of a single system of nonsectarian education was as far away as ever. The creation of the parochial school, however, did not forever resolve the ques-

tions that divided Protestants and Catholics on education. Burdened by an expensive private system, some Catholics continued to seek financial support from the state, focusing at first on accommodations with local public schools and then, in the mid-twentieth century, launching a quest for federal aid.

At the local level, some Catholics found it possible to put aside the goal of a purely parochial education and thereby to win financial support for schools that continued to offer religious education. In 1873, for example, a Poughkeepsie, New York, parish invited the public school board to assume substantial control over two former parochial schools. The school board paid the costs of instruction and selected teachers and textbooks with the approval of the pastor. The church provided religious education before and after school and controlled the physical facilities when they were not being used for classes.

The Poughkeepsie plan was copied in several cities in New York and New England, and a similar scheme in Faribault, Minnesota, had a least a short-lived influence in the Midwest. In general, eastern Catholics were more enthusiastic about these plans than were westerners, but nowhere did such accommodations become more than purely local arrangements, the product less of clear public policy than of pockets of tolerance in a land where lines between public and private education were being defined in increasingly severe terms.

The quest for federal aid was even less successful. Catholics began their efforts to win federal support after the Second World War, when public schools were also looking to Washington for help. In order to avoid inflaming the church-state issue, Catholics focused their efforts on obtaining support for auxiliary services such as transportation and health care rather than for instruction. Yet even these modest requests raised fears that Catholics were seeking public support for the total programs of their schools. Although court decisions did not forbid aid to auxiliary services, a powerful coalition of Protestants, Jews, and liberal secularists effectively blocked every significant Catholic effort to obtain federal support.

Despite these failures to win state financial support, Catholic parochial education continued to show a remarkable vitality. The peak of enrollment came in the mid-1960s when 5.6 million students attended Catholic elementary and secondary schools. For a variety of reasons, including the burden of double taxation on Catholic parents, enrollment has declined steadily since 1965. By 1989, enrollment had reached 2,551,119.[13] Nevertheless the Catholic parochial school system remained the nation's largest system of private education, offering a significant alternative to the public school.

Other Dissenting Traditions. From the beginning of the public school movement, Catholics formed the largest group of dissenters, and the parochial school system they erected in the last half of the nineteenth century remains to this day an important barrier to the ancient dream of a sin-

gle system of public schooling. Yet, Catholics have hardly been the only critics of the nonsectarian school. An array of Protestant denominations have either rejected the public school or made uneasy accommodations with it. Likewise, Jews and Eastern Orthodox groups, while usually willing to send their children to the public school, have often found it necessary to counter its Protestant bias with after-hours or Sunday school instruction in the tenets of their own particular faiths.

Of the Protestant dissenters, the most powerful have come from the Lutheran tradition. Many Lutherans, to be sure, rallied to the public school relatively early, though few were among the leaders of the effort to create the system. This was especially the case in the well-settled areas of the East, where most synods abandoned their church schools in the middle decades of the nineteenth century and sent their children instead to the new public schools. A number of synods in the West, however, were far more skeptical of public education, and they elected to create a parochial school system that was not unlike the system created by the Catholic Church.[14]

The strongest and most persistent support for parochial schools came from the Missouri Synod, a conservative synod that actually spanned a number of western states. Overwhelmingly German by background, Missouri Synod Lutherans sought to preserve both their culture and the purity of their religious doctrines by creating schools that would teach German as well as English and would make the catechism an integral part of moral education. Like Catholics, these Lutherans were convinced that a proper moral education required instruction in the specific doctrines of the church; the nonsectarian religion of the public school was simply too vague to provide an adequate basis for preserving the faith or building Christian character.

Missouri Synod Lutherans opened their first parochial schools in the late 1830s. By 1872, they had established 472 schools, which served more than 30,000 students, roughly one school for every congregation. Growth continued apace throughout the late nineteenth century and began to slow only in the twentieth, when the creation of new schools began to fall behind the creation of new congregations. Although Missouri Synod schools have become less distinctive over the years (the teaching of German, for example, was abandoned during the First World War), the system has remained strong, enrolling in 1982 more than 177,000 students in 1,584 elementary schools and more than 16,000 students in 61 high schools.[15]

A more diffuse strand of Protestant dissent has emerged only in the twentieth century, but in recent years it has become the major factor in the growth of private religious education. Supported by a range of evangelical and fundamentalist Christians, this movement has produced both a bitter protest against the secularization of public schools and a vigorous effort to create Christian day schools, where religion and morality could once

again be taught together. Supported by local congregations or by like-minded Christians from different denominations, Christian day schools have grown dramatically since the mid-1960s, when they began to benefit from both a disillusionment with secular education and, in some parts of the country, from the progress of racial integration in the public schools.[16]

A remarkably diverse group of institutions, Christian day schools have never constituted a system of education. Although some belong to associations of private schools, others are so fiercely independent that they have failed even to report their enrollments. Yet, the schools have taken a fairly uniform approach to moral education, rooting it firmly in the Bible and insisting that it infuse every part of school life. As one champion of the scheme has put it, "Christian schools are Christian institutions where Jesus Christ and the Bible are central in the school curriculum and in the lives of teachers and administrators. . . . Ours is a Christ-centered education presented in the Christian context."[17]

Supported by the fastest growing wings of Protestantism, Christian day schools have expanded dramatically in the past quarter century. Given the independence of many of the schools, precise estimates of size and enrollments are difficult to come by, but Bruce S. Cooper and Grace Dondero estimate that there were in 1989 more than 7,000 schools with a total enrollment of over 985,000 students.[18]

If various Christian denominations have had grounds to find public schools inadequate, Jews have had cause to be even more aggrieved. Nondenominational Christianity may have seemed insubstantial to many Protestants and misguided to Catholics, but to Jews it was entirely outside their religious tradition. Yet, Jews have been strong supporters of public education. Seeing it as an avenue to opportunity and respectability in the New World, nineteenth and early twentieth century Jews, especially those in the Reform tradition, enrolled the vast majority of their children in the public school. At the same time, they made provisions for preserving their religious and cultural traditions, creating Saturday or Sunday "Hebrew" schools or after-school sessions where children learned Jewish history and religion, often using the same kind of catechectical approaches that Catholics and Lutherans employed in their parochial schools. In some of these schools, children learned Hebrew, and after the late nineteenth century immigration from Eastern Europe, some learned Yiddish as well, making the Jewish schools a repository for both the religious and the cultural heritage.[19]

Although the majority of Jews sent their children to public schools, a few, especially from Orthodox and Conservative persuasions, favored the Jewish day school, a school that mirrored the Catholic and Lutheran parochial schools by offering both sacred and secular education to its students. Only a small percentage of Jewish children attended the day school during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but beginning in the 1920s the day school entered a period of growth that continued through the

middle decades of the century. For reasons that are not entirely clear to historians, day schools became more popular, enrolling more than 100,000 in 1980, as weekend and after-hours programs steadily lost students. Still small by comparative standards, the Jewish day school has served nonetheless as reminder that some strands of Judaism remain committed to a system that roots moral education firmly in religion.[20]

Education and the Laws of Church-State Relations

Supporters of public schooling have rarely accepted private religious schools with equanimity. They have worked not only to prevent public aid to private ventures but have tried on occasion to cripple, even to outlaw, religious schools. In the 1880s and 1890s, for example, Protestant nativists in several states tried to enact laws that would restrict and weaken both Catholic and Lutheran parochial schools. In 1889 both Wisconsin and Illinois passed statutes that gave local school boards power to enforce compulsory attendance of children in districts where they lived and in approved schools where English was the language of instruction. Although these statutes did not prevent the use of private institutions to meet the requirements, they were a direct assault on parochial schools, which often offered instruction in German or other immigrant languages, and which generally enrolled students from a variety of districts.

Such restrictive legislation rarely succeeded (the Wisconsin and Illinois laws were quickly repealed with devastating political consequences for their supporters), but efforts continued throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to retard the growth of private education. The most extreme measure—and the last significant one—was the Oregon School Law of 1922, which required children between the ages of eight and sixteen to attend public schools. Controversial from the first, the law engendered immediate litigation that ultimately resulted in a Supreme Court decision declaring it unconstitutional.[21]

Although religious schools never again faced the kind of official hostility exhibited in these laws, they also received little encouragement. Public policy remained resolutely opposed to financial aid for church schools, and legal theory and precedent gradually constructed a wall of separation between church and state that was far higher than anything the authors of the Constitution had imagined. During the nineteenth century, it was the state courts interpreting state constitutions that did most to prevent the use of public funds for sectarian schools, but in the twentieth century the federal judiciary, especially the Supreme Court, has taken the lead in blocking efforts to provide state aid to private, religious schools.[22]

As courts and legislatures have drawn ever-clearer prohibitions against state aid to private schools, they have found it more difficult to defend the traditional place of Protestant Christianity in public schools. Slowly and often reluctantly, courts began in the late nineteenth century to

respond more sympathetically to those who complained about Bible-reading and prayer in the public schools. Especially in the Midwest, where Lutherans among others felt strongly about church-state divisions, state courts banned Bible-reading, usually grounding their decisions on state constitutions rather than on federal statutes or precedents. Such decisions did not initially affect practice in many parts of the country, and as late as 1949, 12 states required Bible-reading and 21 permitted it. Even in states with clear legal prohibitions, some localities continued to follow traditional practices well into the middle of the century. Only when the Supreme Court declared school prayer illegal in 1962 (*Engel* v. *Vitale*) and Bible-reading illegal in 1963 (*School District of Abington Township, Pennsylvania* v. *Edward Lewis Schemp* 374 U.S. 203) did such religious activities disappear from the public school classroom.

The Ironic Effects of Nonsectarianism

The effort of the Protestant majority in the United States to deal with the problem of religion and moral education by creating a single nonsectarian system of public schooling has produced ironic results. Conceived initially as a system that would create harmony among disparate religious groups, it has instead bred hostility among many of them. From the first, champions of the idea of nonsectarianism underestimated the strength of religious differences in the society, and they failed to find a ground common enough even to unite all Protestants. They did much to spread their own faith, but by trying to turn their particular world view into a kind of civic religion, they deepened divisions in the society, driving embittered dissenters to create their own schools and permanently thwarting the possibility of a single system of public schooling.

Equally ironic has been the connection between nonsectarianism and the secularization of public education. The early Protestant supporters of public schools were insistent on the connections between morality and religion, and they clearly saw the public school as a way to spread the general tenets of Protestant Christianity. Yet, in order to prevent state aid to Catholic education, they were compelled to expand the religious neutrality of the public school. With every Catholic charge that public education was effectively Protestant religious education, public school leaders found it necessary to weaken the theological content of moral education. This effort to protect nonsectarianism was not, of course, the only force involved in the secularization of schools, but it clearly was the original source and it accelerated the process from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. By mid-twentieth century the public school had become so devoid of religious content that even many Protestant groups who had been its strongest defenders now turned against it, finding themselves in the end closer to the Catholic position on religion and morality than to the nonsectarianism that their forebears had done so much to create.

Chapter 3: NOTES

1. Horace Mann, comments in *Common School Journal* 3 (no.1), quoted by [Mary Mann], *The Life of Horace Mann*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1865), 142.
2. For an excellent account of the rise of nonsectarianism and many other matters discussed in this chapter, see Lloyd P. Jorgenson, *The State and the Non-Public School, 1825-1925*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987.
3. Heman Humphrey, "The Bible in Common Schools," *The Lectures Delivered Before the American Institute of Instruction, 1843* (Boston: William D. Ticknor, 1844), 10.
4. Harry S. McKeen, "The Ends of School Discipline," *Lectures of American Institute of Instruction, 1835*, p. 150.
5. Humphrey, "The Bible in Common Schools," 24.
6. See Anne M. Boylan, *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution, 1790-1880* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).
7. Calvin E. Stowe, "Education of Immigrants," *Transactions of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers, 1835* (Cincinnati: The Institute, 1836), 66.
8. Horace Mann, *Twelfth Annual Report of the Board of Education together with the Twelfth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board, 1848* (Boston: State Printer, 1849), 135; Horace Bushnell, *Common Schools: A Discourse on the Modifications Demanded by the Roman Catholics, Delivered in the North Church, Hartford, March 25, 1853*, reprinted in *American Writings on Popular Education*, ed. Rush Welter (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), 191; *Twelfth Annual Report on the Condition of the Common Schools to the City Council of Cincinnati, 1841* (Cincinnati: Daily Republic Office, 1841), 14-15.
9. F. Michael Perko, *Enlightening the Next Generation: Catholic and Their Schools, 1830-1890* (New York: Garland, 1988), introduction.
10. Jorgenson, *State and Non-Public School*, 74.
11. Ibid., 76-83.
12. *Acta et decreta concilii plenari Baltimorensis tertii* (Baltimore, 1886), reprinted in *Catholic Education in America: A Documentary History*, ed. Neil G. McCluskey (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), 94.
13. Bruce S. Cooper and Grace Dondero, "Survival, Change, and Demands on America's Private Schools: Trends and Policies," *Educational Foundations* 5 (Winter 1991): 57.
14. See Walter H. Beck, *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States: A History of the Developments of Parochial Schools and Synodical Educational Policies and Programs*, 2nd ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965).
15. Jon Diefenthaler, "Lutheran Schools in America," in *Religious Schooling in America*, ed. Carper and Hunt, 36, 41.
16. See James C. Carper, "The Christian Day School," in ibid., ch.5; Susan D. Rose, *Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan: Evangelical Schooling in America* (New York: Routledge, 1988).
17. Paul A. Kienel, "The Forces Behind the Christian School Movement," *Christian School Comment* (1977): 1, quoted by Carper, "Christian Day School," 114.
18. Cooper and Dondero, "Survival, Change, and Demands," 63.
19. See Richard C. Hertz, *The Education of the Jewish Child: A Study of 200 Reform Jewish Religious Schools* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1953); Judah Pilch, ed., *A History of Jewish Education in America* (New York: American Association for Jewish Education, 1969).
20. Eduardo Rauch, "The Jewish Day School in America: A Critical History and Contemporary Dilemmas," in *Religious Schooling in America*, ed. Carper and Hunt, 142, 148.
21. *Pierce* v. *Society of Sisters of Holy Name of Jesus and Mary* 268 U.S. 510 (1925). See David B. Tyack, "The Perils of Pluralism," *American Historical Review* 74 (October 1968): 74-98; Jorgenson, *State and Non-Public School*, ch. 10; Thomas C. Hunt and Norlene M. Kunkel,

"Catholic Schools: The Nation's Largest Alternative School System," in *Religious Schooling in America*, ed. Carper and Hunt, 9.

22. Jorgenson, *State and Non-Public School*, 136-37.

Chapter 4

The Effects of Modernity, 1890s-1940s

4

What had been a consensus in the nineteenth century, among Protestants and Catholics alike, about the centrality of moral education in the schools received its first serious challenge in the last years of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth. The challenge came not in the form a frontal assault but stemmed rather from the need of the school to expand its functions in response to the demands of a distinctively modern society. As schools began to teach students the new social, academic, and vocational skills required by a complex corporate and bureaucratic order, moral education was forced to compete for a place in an increasingly crowded curriculum. At the same time, educators began to debate the adequacy of traditional forms of moral training and to explore the possibility that modernity required entirely new approaches to the ancient task of educating moral men and women.

Similar developments began even earlier in institutions of higher education, where the expansion of knowledge and a new sensitivity to professional preparation splintered the curriculum and gave scientific and practical subjects a primacy over cultural and moral studies. Especially in large, prestigious universities, the pursuit of research—both pure and practical—altered the whole tone of the collegiate experience and left educators searching, almost desperately, for ways in which to preserve a place for moral concerns in higher education.

The vast expansion and transformation of education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represented a response both to changes in the workplace and to new social and cultural forms. The productive system of modern society placed a premium on specialization, technical expertise, and the ability to interact smoothly in an impersonal, rule-governed corporate structure. Success in this system depended less on character in the traditional sense than on skill, efficiency, and social competence. Schools responded by increasing their academic offerings, by providing a complex social apprenticing, and by offering vocational counseling and instruction. To acquire the new skills, students remained in school for longer and longer periods, as high schools doubled their enrollments in

every decade between 1890 and 1940 and colleges began to appeal to a larger and larger clientele.

It was not just the productive side of modern society, however, that led educators to expand and transform the school. Outside the workplace, technological advance and economic abundance created new opportunities for pleasure and recreation at the very time that the growing impersonality of life was freeing individuals from a variety of old restraints. Dance halls, amusement parks, and other forms of mass, commercial recreation grew quickly after the turn of the century, and they were followed in the 1920s by radio and the movies which carried tantalizing messages of personal freedom to every corner of the society. The mass production of the automobile in the late twenties and the growing availability of birth control devices completed the transformation, taking even courtship out of the home and opening up new possibilities for sexual fulfillment. In these circumstances, the worthy use of leisure time as well as new approaches to citizenship became central problems for the modern school, as demanding in their way as were the needs of production.

The dramatic contrasts between the world of work and the world of leisure posed still another problem for modern educators. Once work and leisure had been situated together in the highly personal contexts of neighborhood and community, and a single set values had served people equally well in every sphere of human endeavor. Now the home, the job, the marketplace, the church, and the place of recreation operated by different rules and rewarded different values. As historian Thomas Bender has put it, "What had been a seamless web of community life broke into segments . . . Whereas work, family, and town once supplied mutually reinforcing personal orientations, they became crosscutting sources of identity" in the modern world of the twentieth century.[1] Now schools were forced to prepare students for a variety of roles across the differentiated spheres of a segmented social order.

Roots of Reform in Elementary and Secondary Schools

As educators struggled to meet the varied demands of the new order, they gave far more attention to academic achievement and social competence than had their nineteenth-century predecessors. Schools became complex institutions with a variety of purposes, only one of which was moral education. Yet, concern for moral education did not disappear. Instead its focus was redirected as Americans raised a new set of questions about the meaning of morality in the context of a rapidly developing modern society.

What emerged from these queries at the level of elementary and secondary education in the first forty years of the twentieth century was not a new conventional wisdom, but rather three divergent responses to the problem of moral education in the modern world. Among public edu-

cators, two general views contended. One sought to meet the challenges of the new order in the framework of values that had developed in the nineteenth century. More than simply a reaction against modernity, this effort sought to develop new educational mechanisms to stem the erosion of moral training and preserve traditional values. Usually rallying around one of several programs of "character education," those who favored this approach attempted to retain a central place in the school for the teaching of specific virtues and the cultivation of the traits of good character. The other approach, the product of the progressive education movement, denigrated both the teaching of specific moral tenets and the cultivation of particular character traits and emphasized instead a more flexible and critical approach to moral education. Deeply skeptical of both traditional moral education and the new schemes of character education, progressives believed that modern society required a radically new approach to morality, and they sought to create a moral education that would meet the evolving needs of an ever-changing order. Finally, outside the public school, religious educators followed a third path, continuing to argue the necessity of grounding moral education in the tenets of faith and refusing to compromise with the accelerating trends toward secularization of education.

The divergence of views among public educators appeared as early as the first decade of the century, but progressive voices began to receive a significant hearing only in the middle 1920s. Until then, the effort to preserve traditional values through character education held at least an uneasy dominance in educational discourse and made a substantial impact on actual classroom practice. Religious schools remained strong and defiant throughout the first four decades of the century, offering an ongoing, though often quiet, critique of the efforts of both camps of moral educators in the public schools.

The Effort to Preserve Character

The effort to promote character education programs was less a well-organized movement with a clear rationale than a diffuse attempt to preserve traditional values and insure a place for moral training in the program of the public school. Although the campaign had the support of many prominent educators, especially in the first two decades of the century, its strongest leadership came from outside the established circle of major educational figures. From the beginning the movement had its greatest successes at the local level rather than in the great national forums of educational discourse, winning impressive support from state legislatures, state and city schools boards, private benefactors, and a variety of newspapers and popular magazines.

Always more programmatic than theoretical, the character education movement built not so much on a thorough and coherent analysis of social change as on a vague sense that modern society presented new

challenges to important values and required a strong effort to preserve character. Supporters worried that as youngsters prepared for their narrow occupations in a highly differentiated and segmented society they would lose their moral bearings and perhaps even their physical and mental well-being. One danger of modern schooling was that it would develop a "one-sided efficiency," fitting students for their particular niches in a highly specialized society, but neglecting "the body and the character" and stunting the ability of the individual "to stand alone as a thinking, upright citizen." [2]

Equally threatening to character were the new freedoms of the era. Vice may have been no worse than in the nineteenth century, but now it took place away from the scrutiny of home and community. Even worse the traditional cultural and social sanctions against it had weakened as many modern Americans dismissed older proscriptions as mere prudery. With the spread of modernism in religion and the continuing secularization of the society, fear of eternal punishment lost some of its power to divert men and women from pleasures that were increasingly available and alluring. The "day of science," declared one state teacher's manual, "has taken away from mankind most of the fears that once censored his conduct."[3]

Most champions of character education sought not to turn back the clock but rather to master the new era, to create a program of moral education that would prepare people to operate under the altered circumstances of the twentieth century without losing their integrity and without falling victim to the worst temptations of the day. Few of them viewed their effort as a rearguard action against modernity; instead they believed that traditional values and modern economic and social organization were entirely compatible as long as children were properly prepared to live ethical lives in the new order.

Champions of character education developed a program only slowly. In the first decade of the century, those who worried about the place of moral education in modern schooling proposed a hodge-podge of remedies. Some favored specific courses in ethics or in "manners and morals" to supplement the usual work of the classroom. Milton Fairchild, for example, spent his early years in what became a lifetime of efforts in behalf of character education developing lantern slides designed to enhance the teaching of moral values. Others tried simply to shore up and extend the characteristic approaches of nineteenth century moral education, paying increasing attention to the adolescent years and the rapidly growing junior and senior high schools.

By the middle of the second decade of the century, a more coherent program had emerged. Heavily influenced by a variety of reforms outside the school, especially the creation of such youth organizations as the Boy Scouts, 4-H clubs, and Campfire Girls, the new approach to character education emphasized the use of elaborate codes of conduct and the careful

cultivation of group processes designed to encourage good behavior and moral growth. The hope of reformers was to turn traditional values into a modern creed and to use the vast new socializing powers of the school to create character as well social and vocational competence.

It was the use of character codes that most clearly set these reformers off from the progressives. These codes were essentially lists of virtues, sometimes presented in the form of laws or pledges and designed to provide a focus for moral education both in and outside the classroom. The most influential, and one of the earliest, of the codes was written in response to a competition sponsored by the Character Education Association, a private organization created in 1911 and headed by Milton Fairchild. Authored by William Hutchins and published in 1917, the "Children's Morality Code" outlined "ten laws of right living": self-control, good health, kindness, sportsmanship, self-reliance, duty, reliability, truth, good workmanship, and teamwork. Directed at physical and mental hygiene as well as at moral development, the laws provided codes of behavior in each area. The law of reliability, for example, read:

> **The Good American is Reliable**
>
> Our country grows great and good as her citizens are able more fully to trust each other. Therefore:
>
> 1. I will be honest, in word and in act. I will not lie, sneak, or pretend nor will I keep the truth from those who have a right to it.
>
> 2. I will not do wrong in the hope of not being found out. I cannot hide the truth from myself and cannot often hide it from others.
>
> 3. I will not take without permission what does not belong to me.
>
> 4. I will do promptly what I have promised to do. If I have made a foolish promise, I will at once confess my mistake, and I will try to make good any harm which my mistake may have caused. I will so speak and act that people will find it easier to trust each other.[4]

Many schools across the country quickly adopted the Hutchins code as a focus for their character training, sometimes using the code in its original form, sometimes modifying it in minor ways. Boston schools, for example, added a "law of obedience" to the code and made it the center of their program of moral instruction in the 1920s and early 1930s. Similar codes emerged from other sources—from city school superintendents, state school boards, even from *Colliers* magazine, which distributed a third of a million copies of its code to the nation's schools. All of these codes extolled the traditional virtues, and they differed only in the smallest details. Indeed some school systems used the codes virtually interchangeably.

Educators expected moral codes to prompt teachers to attend to the development of character and to provide themes for instruction. In

Boston, the School Committee published elaborate guides for teachers and encouraged schools to emphasize one law each month. In Birmingham, Alabama, schools stressed one virtue each year, covering its particular code in the twelve years of schooling. The codes provided a focus for more than formal instruction. They formed the themes of posters in the classrooms and hallways, and they were emphasized in extracurricular activities. Thus a school focusing on the virtue of loyalty might assign readings chosen to illustrate the theme and display banners with such slogans as "When a Man thinks, lives, and says 'WE,' he's Loyal." To help teach thrift, Birmingham schools encouraged children to open bank accounts, to sell newspapers and surplus coat hangers, to create book exchanges, and to form budgeting clubs. The aim was to use the codes as a way of suffusing every facet of school life with moral education.[5]

If codes provided the substantive focus of moral education in this scheme, group activities offered the preferred method. Unlike nineteenth-century educators who usually viewed the classroom as a collection of individuals, each of whom learned values through direct contact with textbook and teacher, these twentieth-century reformers emphasized the importance of the group in the educational process. Impressed both by the importance of teamwork in modern forms of production and by new psychological theories about the formation of social instincts, these educators expected group interactions to play a vital role in developing character. Without ever giving up their own authority in the educational process, they sought to mobilize the power of peer influence to encourage moral development.

The reform in methods occurred both in and outside the classroom, with teachers now exploiting a whole variety of opportunities to place students in social situations that could be structured to produce moral development. Following the lead of the scouting movement, reformers were especially fond of student clubs. Sometimes the clubs were created within classes where students would adopt constitutions and creeds and pledge to cultivate such virtues as thrift, industry, honesty, and loyalty. An elementary class in Norfolk, Virginia, for example, created an elaborate constitution for its "Hustling Citizens' League" whose object was to "have a better system of working together, better laws, better organizations, and better citizens; and to be a good example for the younger citizens of our school, teaching them to be kind and just to one another."[6] Classes in many other schools across the nation followed the suggestions of the National Character Institution and created clubs called "Uncle Sam's Boys and Girls," which not only promoted the usual virtues but even helped discipline their own members.

Outside the classroom, clubs played an even greater role. Not only did schools open their facilities to local youth organizations, they created an array of clubs of their own. Lincoln High School in Ferndale, Michigan, for example, had large Hi-Y and Girl Reserves clubs, both of which com-

bined recreational activities with work for local charitable causes.[7] In Nebraska the state plan for character education called for schools to open chapters of the Knighthood of Youth, a club that used medieval ritual to attract students and prepare them for good citizenship. And in Boston some schools even organized clubs around the cultivation of particular virtues: the Courtesy Club, the Prompt Club, the Thrift Club, and the like. Especially in the high school, students across the country were encouraged to join clubs that were expected to make a significant contribution to the development of character.[8]

In emphasizing group activities, character educators sought to use peer influence without surrendering adult authority. Teachers were expected to exercise a close supervision of all clubs and to orchestrate group activities to achieve the desired educational effect. Thus the Nebraska character education plan called for the extensive use of projects to encourage moral growth: "The teacher, with the assistance of the officers of Uncle Sam's Club, will devise character projects to be carried out by the club which will give expression to and tend to form habits in accordance with the important moral ideals. For example, appreciation of the right of the aged to courtesy and respect will be developed by getting the club to appoint a committee to perform acts of courtesy and service toward some aged person of the neighborhood." Similarly, should students show tendencies toward thievery or dishonesty, the teacher would mobilize the club to take action: "The right and wrong of neighborhood stealing and suppression of petty stealing by club members from nearby stores will be determined and carried out through a court of justice organized by the club judge, under advice from the teacher."[9]

Teachers had two other useful tools in their efforts to shape character. First, in many schools, they could now include citizenship grades on their report cards. Although these grades were often little more than the deportment grades of the nineteenth century, some schools used them as measures of moral development. Second, where group instruction failed to achieve the desired effect, teachers could resort to the "case method" of moral education, which was in effect individual counseling for students judged to be delinquent.

The tendency of early twentieth-century reformers to use innovative pedagogical techniques to cultivate traditional virtues reflected their faith that modern life, for all of its novelty, could be managed in the framework of familiar values. The substance of their program was derived directly from nineteenth-century morality. No one nourished on the McGuffey readers could have been surprised by the values these reformers sought to promote. Even their methods owed something to the nineteenth-century assumptions. Like their predecessors, for example, these reformers saw moral education as fundamentally a problem of motivation, not of ethical reasoning, and they sought to use every means available to them to ingrain good habits and to strengthen the will of students against the temp-

tations of the day. For them character was less a matter of making fine ethical distinctions than of having the resolve to do the right thing.

Yet, despite their obvious debt to traditional moral education, these reformers were involved in something more than an effort to hold onto an outmoded past. They understood that the world had changed, and they were willing to make a range of accommodations to twentieth-century life. Few of them, for example, gave the morality codes religious sanction; most were willing to accept an entirely secular approach moral education in the schools. Moreover, for all of their commitment to habit formation and absolute morality, they made at least a small place for the freedom of the learner, especially at the high school level, and leavened their instructional strategies with such open-ended techniques as debates and socialized recitations.

By promoting codes of conduct and urging the formation of clubs, early twentieth-century reformers offered an effective way to keep moral questions on the school's agenda and to bring some unity to a curriculum that seemed in constant danger of splintering. The program was concrete and comprehensible, and it won quick support from teachers and principals as well as educational leaders who operated at loftier levels. It provided students with a varied and thorough moral schooling in precisely the kinds of group settings that were characteristic of modern life, and it gave to the whole educational enterprise a pervasive moral tone. Its blending of physical and mental hygiene with moral and civic education—however peculiar by today's standards—provided a sense of wholeness to the idea of character and gave students a concrete way of understanding the connections between individual conduct and the public good.

At the same time, the failure of reformers to root their codes of conduct in an ethical system or to provide a way by which beliefs could be validated made their schemes unusually susceptible to the dictates of conventional morality. As critics pointed out, the codes and clubs so cherished by these reformers sometimes did little more than reenforce the standards of middle-class respectability. The scheme showed little tolerance of cultural diversity, and there can be no doubt that reformers expected it to play an important role in eliminating the differences that set immigrants off from the mainstreams of American life. By combining moral prescriptions with a heavy-handed patriotism, reformers cast their lots with those who sought to deal with diversity by creating rigorous assimilationist schooling.

Nor did the reform encourage individual autonomy. Where individuals received special attention at all the purpose was always to return them to conformity with the general rules of behavior. Instructional strategies gave legitimacy to peer pressure and did little to develop the resources that would allow individuals to take bold stands against conventional standards. Moreover, because the scheme subordinated ethical reasoning to an emphasis on training of the will, it did little to encourage a broad, critical

social vision and gave scant guidance to the individual faced with the problem of choosing from among conflicting values.

Its weakness notwithstanding, the effort to preserve traditional morality was pervasive in American schools in the first three decades of the century. By the mid-1920s, when the effort peaked, the use of codes was common in schools everywhere and clubs designed in part to build character were virtually universal. This approach to moral education, however, was never without its critics, and in the late 1920s its influence began a slow decline. In part, the decline was a product of a growing impatience with conventional moral restraints, an impatience reflected in a variety of colorful ways in the 1920s. In part, it was the result of a concerted attack by progressive educators, who pressed their case with increasing urgency in the 1930s when economic and social dislocations seemed to call for a more critical approach to moral education. The publication in 1928-30 of now-famous studies by Hugh Hartshorne and Mark A. May, which raised serious questions about the effectiveness of heavily didactic moral education programs, gave critics powerful ammunition and put champions of traditional morality in a defensive posture that they have struggled to escape ever since.[10]

The Progressive View

A radically different approach to moral education emerged from the efforts of a small but powerful group of reformers associated with the progressive education movement. Articulated first at the turn of the century by such theorists as John Dewey, this approach gained supporters slowly until the mid-1920s when it was embraced by a growing number of liberal Protestant clergy, intellectual leaders, professional elites, and educators associated with major universities and large urban and suburban school systems. These Progressives did not simply accept modernity, they believed that the new order offered hope of an unprecedented period of social and moral progress if only Americans would abandon the tyranny of tradition and strive for a just, productive, and democratic society through the application of science and reason to the complex problems of the day.

Progressive educators mounted a scathing attack on character education programs that emphasized the use of morality codes or the teaching of particular virtues. These programs, they argued, had produced poor results. "A knowledge of proverbs does not make good or efficient men," wrote one reformer. "Sancho Panza was running over with them. Nor does morality result from continual obedience to the dictates of conventionality."[11] New, "scientific" study, reformers believed, had raised serious questions about the ability of virtue-oriented character education either to affect the immediate behavior of children or to instill values that people would apply across the various dimensions of their lives. As Hugh Hartshorne, a Progressive student of character education, put it: "If, for example, honesty

is a unified character trait, and if all children either have it or do not have it, then we would expect to find children who are honest in one situation to be honest in all other situations and, *vice versa*, to find dishonest children to be deceptive in all situations. What we actually observe is that the honesty or dishonesty of a child in one situation is related to his honesty or dishonesty in another situation mainly to the degree that the situations have factors in common."[12]

The problem with conventional moral education was not simply its pedagogical ineffectiveness, however. Progressives argued that an emphasis on particular virtues provided a poor guide to ethical living in modern society. Simple aphorisms or codes of conduct were too crude, too rigid, to guide men and women in the highly specialized, ever-changing order of the modern world. "We need to see," declared Dewey, "that moral principles are not arbitrary, that they are not 'transcendental'; that the term 'moral' does not designate a special region or portion of life."[13] What was required was ethical flexibility and a sure sense of the relativity of values. Nowhere was the new standard proclaimed more forcefully than in the 1932 report of the Character Education Committee of the National Education Association's Department of Superintendence, which called for a moral education that taught students to apply values as particular situations dictated. "Relativity," the report declared, "must replace absolutism in the realm of morals as well as in the spheres of physics and biology. This of course does not involve the denial of the principle of continuity in human affairs. Nor does it mean that each generation must repudiate the system of values of its predecessors. It does mean, however, that no such system is permanent; that it will have to change and grow in response to experience."[14]

The necessity of relativity was in part the product of a rapid change. Actions that produced ethical results in one era might not be so effective in another. "Character involves not only right intentions, but a certain degree of efficiency," wrote Dewey. "Now efficiency, as biologists have made us very well aware, is a problem of adaptation, of adjustment to the control of conditions. Are the conditions of modern life so clear and so settled that we know exactly what organs, what moral habits and methods, are necessary in order to get the maximum of efficiency?" Or as the 1932 Department of Superintendence report put it: "Analysis of adult activities today gives a list which may not constitute the best type of acts, even for today, and which is almost certain to be inadequate at some points for the changed social order."[15]

But the value of relativity was also related to the highly specialized and segmented character of modern life. What was moral in one sphere of life might be immoral in another, and men and women were expected to adjust their behavior as they moved from public to private realms, from the world of work to the world of the family, even from one business or profession to another. Ethical behavior was related to particular situations, and

character education was meant to teach "constructive reactions" to life's extraordinarily varied contingencies. "The need for character is all bound up in the event itself. It is tangible and concrete and real. It cannot be escaped or relegated to copy books. Life is one situation after another, and each situation has possibilities of richer or poorer living, of greater or less integration of values."[16]

Rejecting the notion that the school should teach specific moral precepts or encourage particular traits, progressive educators hoped to cultivate in students both a quality of open-mindedness and a general ability to make moral judgments. Their model for ethical behavior was the disinterested expert, the professional who brought both a spirit of inquiry and a high level of competence to the solutions of problems. What worked in the world of science and technology, they believed, would work as well in the solution of other human problems, if only students could be taught moral imagination, "the ability to picture vividly the good or evil consequences to self and to others of any type of behavior."[17]

Although progressives viewed their approach to moral education as a comprehensive scheme, they consistently gave more attention to great social and political issues than to matters of private conduct. Reversing the emphasis of earlier moral educators, they expressed little interest in the drinking habits or sexual conduct of individuals as long such personal behavior did not impede the ability to operate as intelligent and productive citizens. Character in this view was not a matter of adhering to some set of rules of upright conduct—that was mere Victorianism. Instead character had to do with the ability to contribute to the creation of a more humane and democratic society. "The moral," wrote Dewey in an attack on virtue-centered character education, "has been conceived in too goody-goody a way. Ultimate moral motives and forces are nothing more or less than social intelligence—the power of observing and comprehending social situations,—and social power—trained capacities of control—at work in the service of social interest and aims."[18] Tired of what seemed to be the unnecessary restraints placed on personal behavior by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century moralists, progressives sought to give character education a decidedly more civic cast.

In viewing character as the ability to act efficiently and thoughtfully in the cause of social improvement, progressives gave new significance to the role of intellectual endeavor in moral education. The good citizen, in their scheme, was not simply the person with the right intentions and a strong will, but someone who could understand the social world and carefully calculate the social consequences of actions. Yet, what progressives sought was not intellectual endeavor of the traditional sort. Skeptical about the wisdom of the past, they turned not to established texts, but rather to the methods of scientific inquiry and democratic decision-making, hoping to equip students with the intellectual skills that would allow them to deal constructively and creatively with the social problems of the day.

In keeping with these goals, progressives constructed a pedagogy that emphasized problem-solving and social learning. Instead of making inherited tradition the starting point of learning, they sought to build on the immediate experiences of the children. Using familiar problems from everyday life, they hoped to cultivate a mode of problem-solving that employed scientific reasoning and democratic deliberation. Thus, they sought to simulate in the classroom the kinds of challenges that students might encounter in the world of work or politics. They were especially fond of excursions that would allow children to observe adults at work and of projects that would require groups of students to work together on the solution of problems that resembled real-life situations.

Like so many other early twentieth-century educators, progressives believed that children learned best in groups, and they eagerly embraced such innovations as socialized discussion, dramatization, student clubs, and extracurricular activities. Their goals, however, differed from those of other reformers, and they gave group activities an entirely distinctive meaning. Unlike character educators who attempted to use group pressure to reinforce adult codes, progressives expected social learning to teach democratic decision-making and to help children break from tradition and create novel solutions of their own. In the traditional classroom, wrote Hartshorne, students were encouraged "to talk about codes already formulated, to criticize their own behavior in light of conventional standards, to debate whether imaginary characters presented in cases did right or wrong." In the progressive classroom, on the other hand, "life situations taken from the experience of the children of the group. . . . are discussed not in terms of some preformulated code but in terms of the problems confronted, or the efforts made to solve these problems, of the success or failure met with, and of the principle of conduct suggested by the total experiences. From genuine intellectual effort of this sort in which the judgment of the pupils is respected, there may emerge a *working* ideal, in contrast with the set of idle, though pious, effusions of adults to which children have almost universally been invited to give lip service."[19]

Because they identified character as way of thinking rather than as a knowledge of particular virtues, progressives believed that all school subjects held the promise of providing moral education. In this respect, they joined other American educators in favoring a schooling that used a wide range of opportunities to shape character. At the same time, progressives had a special faith in the ability of the social studies to provide moral education, and they elevated social studies courses above the literary disciplines that had furnished much of the wisdom of earlier programs of character education. The social studies, they believed, would help promote social understanding, develop critical thinking, and make children sensitive to their social obligations. Especially promising, in their view, was the expanding-horizons approach to the social studies, an approach that began by exploring the familiar institutions of the local community and led by

steps to study of state, national, and international affairs. A near-perfect embodiment of progressive pedagogy, the expanding-horizons approach broke with the formal traditions of political economy and encouraged students to use their own experiences rather than classical theories as the building blocks for their moral and civic education.

As their radical pedagogy suggests, educational progressives sought a dramatic departure from traditional character education programs. Impressed by the novelty of modern industrial society and by a pace of change that seemed only to accelerate, they were committed to a profoundly new approach to morality and moral education. In many important respects, their scheme was an extraordinarily imaginative response to modernity. By emphasizing critical thinking, for example, progressives gave students a basis for questioning arbitrary authority, for abandoning outmoded traditions, and for meeting the novel challenges of a world in flux. By emphasizing ethical flexibility and sensitivity to situation, they prepared them to deal with the varying demands of a highly segmented society in which different arenas called for different moral responses. By teaching them to judge actions by social consequence, they gave them a new, purely secular, standard by which to make moral decisions.

Yet, if progressive moral education avoided many of the pitfalls of traditional programs, it created some new ones of its own. By denigrating tradition, weakening the authority of adults, and giving new legitimacy to peer influence, progressivism left students vulnerable to the tyranny of both the immediate group and the present moment. It gave no more protection to the individual than did other twentieth-century approaches. Indeed, its child-centeredness left dissenting students without even the option of invoking adult authority against the power of their peers. "If one looks at it from the standpoint of the individual child," one critic of progressivism has written, "his chances to rebel or to do anything on his own hook are practically nil; . . . rather he is in the position, hopeless by definition, of a minority of one confronted by the absolute majority of all the others."[20]

Nor did progressivism insulate the school from the influence of conventional morality. As Michael Walzer has pointed out, children were even more likely than teachers to be carriers of conventionality. Thus, by weakening the authority of adults in the classroom, progressives made the school more sensitive than ever to the "transient concerns and values of the society."[21] Moreover, by making the immediate experience of the child the starting point of learning, progressives devalued both text and tradition, leaving students with a dearth of cultural materials from which to shape moral decisions. Although progressivism offered students a certain liberation from ancient dogmas, it provided them with far fewer resources for resisting the popular wisdom of their own time and place.

The vagueness of progressive prescriptions was another problem. Teachers found it difficult to provide a moral education that had no place

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for particular virtues: to teach a process of thinking without a specific content was a challenge many could simply not meet. In the absence of concrete guidance on the subject, it was easy to confuse trivial classroom discussions with meaningful moral deliberation. The problem was only confounded by the failure of progressives to offer a clear theory of moral development or to pay adequate attention to purely private conduct and its relationship to the social good.

Because progressive moral education had few easily identifiable programmatic markers, its influence is not easy to measure. State and local school board reports as well as scholarly literature showed a widespread acquaintance with the major tenets of the theory as early as the 1920s and a growing support for it during the 1930s. Many progressive high schools and some city systems made deliberate efforts to encourage the new approach. Denver schools, for example, gradually abandoned their virtue-centered approaches and made the social studies curriculum the core of their efforts to shape character. More often, however, schools offered a hodge-podge of moral education programs, with theoretically incompatible approaches sometimes existing side-by-side. Rarely did progressive moral education root out and replace virtue-centered programs; rather it functioned as a continuing alternative, one of two widely accepted responses to the problem of moral education in the modern world of the early twentieth century.

The Claims of Religion

In marked contrast to nineteenth-century educators, the men and women who shaped the dominant approaches to moral education in the early twentieth century justified their schemes on purely secular grounds. Although many had strong religious views of their own, they largely abandoned the notion that schools should teach a nondenominational Christianity. They were, to be sure, far from rigorous in their secularism, often looking the other way when some schools continued to sanction prayer and Bible-reading, but their bias was toward church-state separation and they rarely made common cause with evangelical or fundamentalist groups who sought to reverse the drift of public policy on the matter. Mainline Protestants, who had favored nondenominational religion in nineteenth-century schools, now accepted a more secular approach, and they drew growing support from Jews and nonbelievers. More than ever to them, religion was a matter for Sunday school, church, and home.

As Chapter 3 indicated, however, many Catholics and Lutherans, as well as some Jews and evangelical Protestants, resisted these efforts to separate religion and moral education. From varying perspectives, they offered a sharp critique of the secularism embodied in both progressive education and virtue-centered moral education approaches. The strongest and best organized dissent came from Catholics, who continued the argu-

ment made in the nineteenth century that moral education required a grounding in the tenets of faith. Catholics took particularly strong exception to progressive theories. They objected to the rigorous secularism of progressivism, to its slavish commitment to science, to its failure to deal with the matter of will, and to its neglect of personal morality. They associated its influence with permissiveness in child-rearing and schooling and held it partially responsible for youthful rebellion and delinquency and for the declining sexual mores of the society.

Catholics were considerably more sympathetic to the character education movement, but even that approach, with all its support for traditional values, did not escape their criticism. In reviewing the Nebraska character education program, the Reverend Luke L. Mandeville, diocesan superintendent of schools in Lincoln, took sharp exception to the claim that a "commission of high-minded men and women . . . could supply us with a code of morals better perhaps than any code yet devised. . . . This of course seems to do scant justice to two considerations imperative in Catholic school teaching: first, that Moses did not devise the decalogue but received it from the Lord on Mount Sinai; secondly, that far from taking counsel from the moral opinions of the majority, the Great Lawgiver had to write, 'With most of them God was not well pleased.' " [22]

At odds with the public school on the matter of religion and disturbed by the growing secularism in character education programs, Catholics, Lutherans, and scattered other sects continued to support parochial schools—often at extraordinary expense. Only on the matter of high schools did they make some accommodations. Where the cost of separate secondary schools was unbearable, many parishes allowed youngsters to attend public high schools instead, assured that children had at least received a strong early religious training. In places where Catholics children attended public schools in large numbers, their parents and priests often became active in school politics, usually in support of released time for religious education—a practice that was common in Boston and many other heavily Catholic areas in the 1930s and 1940s.

The growing secularism of the public school elicited a different response from some evangelical and fundamentalist Protestants. Far less organized than Catholics or Missouri Synod Lutherans and lacking a tradition of parochial schooling, they focused their efforts on retaining a place for religion in public education and on keeping out anything that might either challenge their faith or degrade the morals of their children. They resisted any effort to limit prayer and Bible-reading in the schools, they opposed the teaching of evolution, and they exercised a careful scrutiny over the moral content of schoolbooks.

Evangelicals and fundamentalists won countless victories on the local level. Where they were strong—especially in parts of the rural South—they were able to exercise a measure of censorship of schoolbooks, to drive out teachers who failed to live up to their demanding ideological

and moral standards, and to keep a secure place for prayer, Bible-reading, and religious ceremonies. Rarely, however, did they play a significant role in the various national organizations that established the broad outlines of public educational policy in these years. Often operating at the margins of society, they were, in the end, able to do little to stem the unmistakable movement in the early twentieth century toward a purely secular moral education in the public school.

Moral Education and the Transformation of Higher Learning

The forces that transformed elementary and secondary education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had an equally dramatic effect on colleges and universities. Change was apparent as early as the 1870s, when the expansion of knowledge and a growing demand for professional training began to shatter the tightly prescribed curriculum that had characterized higher education in the antebellum era. The ancient dream of broadly educated people who could integrate the spheres of learning and develop a comprehensive view of the world quickly disappeared as a new generation of educators began to emphasize the production of new knowledge and the preparation of students for specific careers. As research and specialization came to be the dominating ideals of great universities, traditional concern with the character of students subsided and moral education became a distinctly subordinate goal in all but the smallest and most religious of the colleges.

A vast expansion of the curriculum was the most visible sign of change. As knowledge grew and inquiry became more specialized, most traditional studies gave way to a variety of new, more focused disciplines. Moral philosophy was one of the first victims of this process, as its formerly broad domain came to be occupied by such disciplines as ethics, psychology, sociology, and political science. For more than a hundred years, moral philosophy had put the finishing touch on the education of all college students and had set the tone for the whole curriculum; in the late nineteenth century, it largely disappeared, leaving students without a capstone course and colleges without a formal way to complete the process of moral education.

The very structure of the modern university made it difficult to find an adequate substitute for the moral education provided by the antebellum college. A growing emphasis on research encouraged ambitious members of the faculty to limit their time with undergraduate students and to focus their intellectual activities on narrow realms where they could produce new knowledge and establish reputations as experts. As disciplines splintered and fields within disciplines grew more narrow, professors were increasingly unwilling to deal with broad moral questions. By the rules of the new academic game, their task was to attend to the issues that members of the discipline defined as important, and they risked their scholarly

reputations if they ventured beyond these boundaries to engage in serious moral and political debate.

The structural impediments to moral education were reinforced in the twentieth century by the growing influence of positivism, a view that devalued theology and metaphysics and regarded the findings of empirical science as the only knowledge worth having. Positivism had a special impact on the social sciences, where it sharpened the bias against dealing with questions of ethics or values in the classroom. Behaviorism in psychology and the growing use of quantification in other disciplines made it difficult to talk about such matters as choice, purpose, or consciousness, staple topics in older schemes of moral education. Instead, tough-minded social scientists dealt with a world of measurable facts and won their reputations not for their ability to probe ethical issues, but rather for their mastery of the intricate methodologies of modern research.

In opting to emphasize scientific knowledge and to place value questions off limits, positivists were not necessarily expressing a moral callousness. Rather they were acting on the assumption that the problems of the modern world were more technical than moral in nature. What was needed was not contemplation or exhortation, but scientific study and the application of expertise. "The whole drift of present educational thinking," observed one scholar, "is to produce the efficient man—the man related by forceful deeds to the world without."[23] It was this faith in the progressive influence of the efficient man that allowed positivists to embrace a "value-free" learning without ever losing their sense of moral purpose.

Despite the idealism that underlay it, positivism worked against every effort to preserve a place for moral education. It had equally corrosive effects on religion. Although many scholars and students alike retained a private religious faith, post-Darwinian science and social science left little room for the serious discussion of the supernatural. Students who had once found support for their faith in every corner of the curriculum increasingly had to seek special instruction in departments of religion or in courses on the "Evidences of Christianity." Even these options became limited in the twentieth century as a growing number of colleges severed their denominational ties and many state universities abolished courses in religion out of deference to the doctrine of church-state separation. Although chapel services continued on most campuses, formal support for religion declined dramatically except in institutions that retained their ecclesiastical affiliations.

The Quest for Reform. The forces that threatened religion and moral education on campuses were powerful throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but they did not go unchallenged. A substantial number of Americans, both in and outside higher education, refused to accept the implications of positivism and worked hard to reserve a place for moral and spiritual matters in colleges and universities. Most of them understood and accepted the decline of moral philosophy, but they

attempted to find other studies that might provide comparable instruction for modern students. Two clusters of reformers devised the most widely supported approaches to moral education in the modern college and university: progressives, who sought to use ethics courses to cultivate good moral judgment, and champions of liberal culture and general education, who found in the humanities the best hope for cultivating virtuous men and women.

Although progressives hoped to infuse every part of the college curriculum with their particular notions about modernity and morality, they paid special attention to courses in ethics, hoping to use them as the cornerstone of their effort to build a moral education that would prepare students for the shifting ethical demands of contemporary society. Progressives walked a middle line in higher education, rejecting the notion of unchanging ideals but also resisting the kind of positivism that denied a place for the study of normative questions. Not surprisingly John Dewey was in the forefront of the progressive campaign. He not only coauthored (with James H. Tufts) one of the most widely used textbooks in ethics, he campaigned tirelessly for an approach that emphasized the situational character of ethical problems and the need to give students the moral sensitivity and intellectual capacity to deal with the every-changing challenges of the modern world.[24]

Dewey and his progressive colleagues sought not only to revitalize the undergraduate course in ethics, but also to promote the creation of special courses in professional ethics. Convinced that ethical challenges varied across occupations, they argued that students needed to study the particular moral dilemmas they were likely to encounter in such fields as law, business, and medicine. By combining work in general ethical theory with the study of the special cases confronting particular professions, progressives hoped to produce men and women who could bring both expertise and moral sensitivity to the solution of modern social problems.

Although progressives exercised an important influence in higher education in the early twentieth century, their reform achieved only a partial success. Their particular ethical theories, to be sure, received a prompt and sympathetic hearing and even came to dominate the ethics textbooks of the 1920s and 1930s, but the stature of ethics courses themselves remained low. The undergraduate course continued to be an elective in most institutions, and only a small minority of students chose to enroll in it. Although a growing number of professional schools followed the prompting of progressives and created special courses in ethics and professional responsibility, they frequently staffed them poorly and rarely gave them an important place in their curricula.

By the late 1930s progressives faced an even more daunting problem as the field of ethics itself began to come under the influence of philosophical analysts, who brought to ethics some of the skepticism about the discussion of moral issues that had become ingrained in the social sciences.

Philosophical analysts subordinated normative questions to metaethical issues, focusing less on questions of right or wrong than on the language and meaning of ethical discourse. As the influence of the analysts grew, students found even courses in ethics a hostile environment for the study of the practical moral dilemmas that confronted them. "The result," as Bernard Rosen has written, "was an academic life in which there were few forums for the discussion of normative issues, and almost no legitimate place for the discussion of normative ethical theories."[25]

As progressives struggled to reform and revitalize the study of ethics, others placed their hopes for moral education in a revival of the humanities. Like the proponents of virtue-centered moral education in elementary and secondary schools, they believed that history, literature, and other liberal studies contained ancient truths that retained their relevance in a modern world. The earliest articulation of this view in the modern era came in the late nineteenth century and had about it both an elitist and antiprogressive cast. Reacting sharply against specialization and careerism, the early champions of liberal culture sought to produce men and women with a breadth of vision, an altruistic spirit, a disdain for materialism, and an aristocratic appreciation for leisure and high culture.[26]

Although liberal culturalists were for a while able to reserve a place in the curriculum for the discussion of virtue, they lost ground steadily after the first decade of the century as their aristocratic pretensions appeared increasingly quaint and dysfunctional. In their place, however, emerged another group of theorists who brought a more democratic spirit to the task of defending the humanities. Associated with what came to be called the "general education movement" in the 1920s and 1930s, these theorists argued that all students should be required to take a core of courses that acquainted them with the main streams of Western culture and prepared them for lives of useful citizenship. What was needed, in this view, was not a small class of leaders schooled in the manners and morality of the gentlemanly class but rather a broad range of people who understood Western values and who could apply their knowledge to the moral questions of the modern world.

The effect of the general education movement was to shore up the place of the humanities and to reverse some of the worst effects of an elective system that had allowed many students to virtually circumvent liberal studies. In response to the movement, some universities began to require courses in Western civilization; others developed more rigorous distribution requirements that compelled students to include at least some courses in the humanities in their programs of study. Yet, as Douglas Sloan has pointed out, general education was "something of a rearguard action," and it never succeeded in creating a completely safe curricular home for moral education.[27] Its local successes—in places like Columbia, Chicago, and St. John's College of Annapolis—were impressive, but students in many institutions of higher education could still pursue their special studies without

learning much about Western values or engaging in the serious study of moral issues.

Reformers also found it difficult to insure that courses in the humanities would address moral questions in any systematic way. Instructors enjoyed a wide latitude in the choice of topics and texts, and not all of them were interested in the moral dimensions of their subjects. Professors in the humanities were under no less pressure to publish than their counterparts in the sciences and social sciences, and their disciplines did not always support inquiry into moral issues. Nor, except in a few special places, were reformers able to create clusters of required courses that together might offer a well-integrated moral education. Thus, while classes in the humanities remained more open to moral discourse than most other classes, they fell far short of providing the kind of thorough moral education that reformers had hoped for.

Character and Campus Life. Those who mourned the failure of curricular reform found little consolation in the evolution of campus life. As higher education lost its moral purpose and faculty became preoccupied with research, students gained increasing control over extracurricular life and quickly severed its connections with the effort to build character. In an attempt to escape the carefully guarded atmosphere of the traditional campus, they turned extracurricular activities into a diversion from serious intellectual and moral pursuits. An important minority, to be sure, found in campus life a chance to undertake serious political activities, and many others affiliated with the YMCA or the newly emerging campus pastorates such as the Newman Club or the Wesley Foundation. The vast majority, however, chose not to use college life as an opportunity to explore moral or religious questions. Instead they tended to view extracurricular activities as a chance to break away from older restraints and explore an array of new freedoms. As Paula Fass and others have pointed out, student frivolity did not necessarily reflect a rejection of adult values, but it did indicate that the majority of students no longer accepted the college campus as a proper place for the airing of their religious or moral views.[28] Like the tough-minded positivists on the faculty, they chose instead to treat value questions as purely private matters and keep them off the agenda of American college life.

Conclusion: The Legacies of Modernization

On the eve of the Second World War, Americans could look back at a wrenching half-century of modernization. For all of its promise of material abundance and expanded freedom, the process had left many troubling questions about morality and moral education. Despite sweeping efforts to reform moral education, especially in the public schools, Americans continued to worry about the character of their young. Moreover, they remained torn about the proper approach to moral educa-

tion in the new environment of the twentieth century. Although progressive approaches had won increasing favor in the public schools of the 1930s, older programs of character education continued to have their strong champions. Sometimes the contending parties were able to reach accommodations within particular schools, but they were never able to resolve their fundamental differences and the debates between them continued to be fierce.

Nor did the process of modernization resolve differences about the connections between religion and moral education. Although a growing number of Catholic and Lutheran parents sent their children to public schools, church leaders in both sects continued to prefer private institutions where religious and moral instruction could be combined. Critical of any purely secular approach to moral education, they continued a long tradition of criticism of the public school. Ironically, they were joined in these years by some evangelical Protestants, who were newly alarmed by the secularization of public education. Once uncritical supporters of the public school, they now scrutinized it carefully and undertook a vigorous, though decentralized, campaign to resist every effort to restrict nondenominational religious activities in the classroom.

Leaders in higher education were as divided as their counterparts in elementary and secondary schools. Here modernization had a dramatic effect, leading some to believe that colleges and universities could focus their efforts entirely on research and professional preparation while leaving moral education to other institutions in the society. The enormous prestige of expertise and the growing influence of a "value-free" science and social science made it tempting to abandon altogether traditional responsibilities for character development. Yet, a large number of educators were unwilling to take that step. Instead they searched for new approaches to the problem of moral education in modern society and developed responses that bore some resemblance to the options devised for elementary and secondary schools. Progressives proposed to use ethics courses as a way of teaching a moral sensitivity to the changing contingencies of modern life, while proponents of liberal culture and general education sought a more virtue-centered approach. While these two responses influenced a broad range of public and private institutions, many church-affiliated colleges and universities carried on a third tradition which continued to combine religion and moral education in a way that was not fundamentally different from the practices of parochial schools.

Chapter 4: NOTES

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Chapter 5

Decline and Revival, 1945-Present

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For those who labored to preserve a place for moral education in colleges and universities, the 1940s and 1950s were a time of continuing disappointment, but champions of moral education in elementary and secondary schools entered the postwar era with a sense of fulfillment and hope. Both the Second World War and the early stages of the Cold War seemed to emphasize the importance of character, at least in the education of children and adolescents, and schools offered a rich variety of activities designed to promote moral and civic growth. Campaigns to collect scrap metal, to purchase saving stamps, and to sell government bonds helped schools combine the shaping of individual character with the teaching of civic responsibility and gave students a sense of connection between their personal efforts and the national destiny. Both progressives and advocates of more traditional character-building schemes found much to support in these programs, and the sharp debates of the 1920s and 1930s softened in the 1940s and 1950s. Leading educational associations now articulated a conventional wisdom that made a place for both the transmission of specific values and the teaching of ethical flexibility, offering just enough to each side of the earlier debates to promote a comfortable sense of accommodation, if not quite consensus, on the place of moral education in the American school.

Just as moral education seemed to have achieved a secure place in modern American schooling, however, new forces began to erode it. In the 1940s and 1950s, the challenges were subtle and indirect, hardly noticeable to many educators, but by the 1960s deliberate moral education was in full-scale retreat in the nation's schools. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s a variety of forces challenged the place of moral education, and schools either rapidly adopted a careful neutrality on moral questions or became entirely indifferent to them. The decline was dramatic, and most educators and policy-makers acceded to it with only a subdued note of regret. A few Americans, however, were alarmed by the development and began in the mid-1960s a quest for a restoration of moral education in the schools. Although that quest has so far produced more rhetoric than action, it has

slowed the decline of moral education, evoked discussion of a variety of new approaches, and created at least the possibility that questions of character and morality might once again enjoy a primary place on the agenda of American education.

Reaffirmations

Most educators found in the events of the 1940s and 1950s a powerful rationale for reaffirming the importance of moral education in the schools. They viewed both the Second World War and the Cold War as moral contests in which the values of democracy and decency were arrayed against the forces of authoritarianism and evil, and they expected the classroom to play an important role in the battle. As Americans united against the international perils, they subordinated the sharp differences about moral education that had split them in the interwar years. An eclectic and accommodating spirit characterized both formal statements about moral education and actual school practice, as educators drew some of their schemes from virtue-centered approaches and others from progressivism. Especially during the Second World War, the involvement of students in character-building community activities gave comfort to moral educators of all persuasions and muddied the differences between them.

The texture of the new spirit was perhaps conveyed most clearly in the 1951 report of the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators entitled *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools*. Fashioned by a group of prominent American educators, this document reaffirmed the importance of moral education in the postwar era and tried to define a balanced program that would at once teach certain values considered central to the American experience and promote the flexibility and open-mindedness necessary to adapt in a fast-changing world.

Drawing on a newly accentuated sense of American uniqueness, the Educational Policies Commission argued that educators could identify "a generally accepted body of values" that should be transmitted in the nation's schools. Among these "essential" values were respect for the individual personality, devotion to truth, commitment to brotherhood, and acceptance of individual moral responsibility. Schools, they argued, had both the right and the responsibility to inculcate these values in their students. Moreover, in a departure from interwar secularism, the Commission urged schools to promote spiritual as well as moral values—to encourage education about religion, to permit children to express their religious opinions "in a natural way," and to allow teachers to show their approval of student participation in religious activities.[1]

Despite its willingness to endorse the teaching of specific values, the Educational Policies Commission stopped short of giving those values universal or transcendent meaning. Like the progressives of an earlier day, the Commission treated values as the product of particular historical cir-

cumstances and proclaimed the need for periodic reformulations. In fact, the Commission recommended that parents and teachers confer to establish the agenda for moral education: "It is especially important that the needs and problems of each community, as well as the probable public reaction, be taken into account from the outset. The very process of participation in preparing, considering, and approving such a list should help teachers and parents reflect on moral and spiritual values in ways which, to some of them at least, will be novel and stimulating."[2]

Most established educational leaders warmly endorsed the moderate formulations of the Educational Policies Commission, but several vocal theorists outside the mainstream of American education tried to revive enthusiasm for an older form of character education, one that emphasized the development of specific character traits and the use of formal codes of conduct. Financed largely by private philanthropic foundations, these theorists were unwilling to make significant compromises with progressive notions. Instead they worked out of a strong religious commitment, and they continued to regard values as transcendent. In their view nothing less than direct instruction in the eternal verities could offer an adequate moral education.

Among the most important of these conservative theorists were Henry Lester Smith, dean of the Indiana University School of Education, and Ernest Ligon, director of the Character Education Project at Union College. Smith, whose work was sponsored by the Palmer Foundation of Texarkana, Arkansas, favored a schooling, especially at the elementary level, that used a variety of techniques to teach morality and patriotism. He proposed the continued use of morality codes, argued for "lessons developed around selected character traits," and found no problem with the use of religious exercises where communities did not object.[3]

Ligon was a more complex figure. A graduate of Yale Divinity School, he studied with Jean Piaget in the 1930s and became a student of the psychology of moral education. A deeply religious man, Ligon also had a powerful faith in the ability of social science to strengthen techniques of moral education. Calling scientific method "one form of prayer," Ligon believed that his research would enable religious educators and character-building agencies to "double their effectiveness every decade for the foreseeable future."[4] Supported generously by the Lilly Endowment and encouraged by Eli Lilly himself, Ligon did not share progressive notions about the evolution of values.[5] Instead, he sought to use science to find better ways to teach eternal truths and develop proper character traits. Although he was familiar with social-scientific critiques of trait-based moral education, Ligon continued to believe that modern science would support the teaching of particular virtues.

Despite his academic position, his large staff, and his access to enormous financial resources, Ligon exercised only a small influence. His views were best known in religious education circles and his methods most

often used in church school classes. Although a few schools experimented with his approach, his work had little general impact on public education. His idiosyncratic approach to religion and science discredited him among both mainstream Protestant theorists and established social-scientific circles. A quaint, fringe figure, Ligon worked hard to keep alive an older tradition of moral education but in the end did little to disturb the more moderate accommodations recommended by the Educational Policies Commission.

Moral Education in Decline: The Early Stages

Despite the lofty declarations of the Educational Policies Commission and the dedicated work of such outsiders as Smith and Ligon, the place of moral education in the school began to erode in the 1940s and 1950s. The subtle decline came not as a result of a concerted attack on moral education, but rather was the product a gradual shift in educational priorities. Without ever fully confronting the implications for moral education, postwar Americans began to demand that schools emphasize high level academic and cognitive skills, often at the expense of the various forms of socialization that had been emphasized by earlier generations. A variety of well-placed Americans called for a new emphasis on intellectual development through study of the hard disciplines, and a noisy attack on progressivism belittled traditional concern with the "whole child." Educators who had once prided themselves on their ability to reshape character now paid more attention to the SAT scores of their students, and middle-class parents scrambled to find schools that would give their children the best chance to qualify for elite colleges and universities, even if that effort required moving the household to an expensive suburb.

The growing emphasis on the cognitive dimensions of education and the subtle neglect of the moral, particularly in public education, is not easily explained, but three developments seem to have played a significant role. First, a growing need for high-level technical and scientific skills, associated especially with revolutions in electronics, physics, and medicine, led Americans to call upon schools for a greater emphasis on intellectual achievement and basic academic skills. Now individual success appeared to have more to do with skill than with character or personality, and ambitious parents began to insist that schools respond to the new situation. As more and more professions raised educational requirements for entry and growing numbers of students aspired to college educations, schools responded by trimming "soft" courses and activities, where character education had often been offered, and by moving resources to college preparatory programs. Even in civics and social studies courses, which had once been havens for character education, reformers now subtly deemphasized prescriptive citizenship training in the interest of instruction that would give students the skills of the detached, professional social scientist.

A second force encouraging the shift in priorities was the emergence of a pervasive anticommunism that threatened to subsume other moral energies of the society and direct attention away from the issues that had been the focus of character education before 1945. Anticommunism proved to be a remarkably inclusive and unifying crusade, bringing together in a common cause a variety of interests who feared for the future of capitalism, democracy, or religion. Schools responded by reshaping moral and civic instruction to focus on the dangers of communism or, in some cases, by creating entirely new courses to prepare students to fight the totalitarian menace. These courses drew a sharp contrast between communist countries and the free world and promoted a relatively uncritical view of the United States as a land of individual rights and opportunity. The "Unit on Communism, Enemy of Democracy" required in Boston schools, for example, warned students to be wary of criticism of the United States from without and suspicious of divisive movements from within. In this atmosphere, teaching national loyalty and giving students the cognitive skills to contribute to the economic and military competition with the Soviets seemed to some educators to exhaust the school's responsibilities for character and citizenship education. Attention to more personal moral duties and more local civic responsibilities declined accordingly.

Finally, a growing tendency of Americans to draw sharp distinctions between private and public realms and to establish different behavioral norms for each sphere led many schools to avoid moral questions that might be considered primarily personal. Sharply accentuating a trend that had begun earlier, Americans of the postwar era increasingly thought of religion and "morals" as personal and private and assigned responsibility for them to home and church rather than to the school. New psychological theories that stressed the importance of shaping character in the first six years of life reinforced the trend, emphasizing the critical influence of the families and relieving the school of some of its responsibilities. Parents of the day became increasingly confident of their ability to impart values and increasingly jealous of their prerogatives in the realm of personal morality, making them somewhat more likely that their predecessors to scrutinize and criticize the moral education provided by the schools.

The Eclipse of Moral Education

Priorities shifted slowly and unevenly in the 1940s and 1950s, and the place of moral education eroded only gradually. Those who neglected matters of character in those decades acted less out of disdain for moral education than out of the need to find more time for purely cognitive development. All of this changed in the 1960s and 1970s, however, when the retreat from moral education became both rapid and purposeful. To the older impulses that had worked to limit moral education were added a variety of new forces produced by one of the most tumultuous eras in

American history. Educators who had once simply neglected moral education now began to regard it as problematic in and of itself—difficult to provide at best and a source of enormous controversy at worst. Faced with other knotty problems as well, most notably racial division, teachers and administrators were only too happy to flee from the task of moral education and return responsibility for character development to family and church.

The forces that made moral education so problematic for the public schools were the products of a number of social and cultural upheavals. The effort to end racial discrimination, the waging of an unpopular war, a deepening cultural pluralism, and a growing willingness to expand the range of acceptable personal conduct all worked to weaken the commitment of schools to moral education. The struggle to achieve racial equality and disputes over the Vietnam War were particularly divisive, giving to social relations in the era a debilitating brittleness. With deep suspicions now sharpening racial, ethnic, and class divisions, Americans lost faith in their ability to find common ground. Increasingly they sought to preserve a fragile peace by accepting differences and encouraging tolerance. In the process, they elevated cultural relativism into a primary social value. Now Americans were to have wide latitude in their choice of lifestyles and in their choice of values, and any institution that tried to limit the options or arbitrate the differences risked aggravating the divisions of a tense, perhaps even explosive, society.

Educators were among the first to feel the effects of the new social tensions and to express the popular relativism. Beginning with the civil rights movement, schools became a focus for the efforts to achieve new rights and protect old entitlements, and advocacy groups began to look over the shoulders of teachers and administrators with an intensity unprecedented in the twentieth century. The growing involvement of the federal government in education only complicated the problem, introducing an alien and often disruptive force into the traditionally local politics of public schooling. Increasingly on the defensive as they tried to balance the demands of competing constituencies, educators began to avoid controversy at almost any cost and to adopt programs designed to offend as few people as possible.[6]

As they negotiated a careful path through a minefield of social tensions, educators were compelled as well to deal with the effects of a growing civil libertarian critique of schools. Concern about the deadening effects of modern society on the individual, which had been growing since the 1940s, now blossomed into a broad skepticism of all established authority. A growing band of radical social critics exercised a particularly harsh judgment on the school, portraying it as an authoritarian institution that smothered creativity and enforced a dull conformity on unwitting students. Intellectuals such as Paul Goodman, John Holt, Jules Henry, Charles Silberman, Ivan Illich, and Charles Bereiter called for a variety of reforms

to provide greater latitude for the young. In most cases their proposals demanded limitations on the school's role in socialization, especially in the realm of moral and political values. Bereiter, for example, argued that public schools should teach skills only, leaving the task of moral education to families, churches, and students themselves. "Education in the areas of personality and values," he proclaimed, "is never free of authoritarian imposition." Intrusion of the public school into such personal matters as values was as dangerous as the mingling of church and state.[7]

The proposals of Bereiter and others of his persuasion were extreme, even by the standards of the sixties and seventies, but they moved in the same direction as public opinion. A large number of Americans in these decades came to distrust established institutions, to fear imposition, and to treat values as purely private matters. Some had lost faith in their own ability to manage modern society and were ready to let the young fashion their own values. In this atmosphere, the range of acceptable behavior in such areas as dress, language, and sex expanded enormously, as a kind of pervasive relativism came to apply to a growing number of human activities. Even the majority of Americans who refused to demand that schools abandon moral education were increasingly prepared to protest any perceived slight to their own particular values and to side with their children in every dispute with school authorities.

One measure of the effects of social tensions and libertarian pressures in these decades was the enormous increase in litigation involving the schools. As Robert Hampel has pointed out, there were more court cases challenging school practices in the years between 1969 and 1978 than there had been in the entire previous fifty years. Moreover, "the percentage of cases decided in favor of students rose dramatically from 19 percent (before 1969) to 48 percent (1969-1978)."[8] Although court decisions left schools with substantial authority in matters of curriculum and student discipline, educators often misunderstood the careful distinctions of judicial opinions and abandoned even authority that courts had left in their hands. Especially in the areas of values education and student codes of conduct, educators responded to litigation and the threat of litigation by taking safe, defensive positions.

Two areas of judicial activity had especially important consequences for moral education. The first was a series of cases that drew an ever clearer line between church and state in education. A continuation of a long-term trend, the effort to remove religion from the classroom achieved important victories in these decades. The landmark Supreme Court cases came in the 1960s. In *Engel* v. *Vitale* (1962), the Court ruled that a New York program that allowed teachers to begin classes with a nondenominational prayer was unconstitutional. In the *Schempp* case of 1963, the Court ruled against devotional Bible-reading in the public schools, putting an effective end to a practice that had survived many local challenges. Subsequent decisions of federal courts reaffirmed the strict barriers between church and

state, and efforts to reverse the trend of legal judgments by constitutional amendment failed repeatedly. Although courts explicitly exempted moral education from their prohibitions, many educators of the sixties and seventies saw the trend of judicial decisions as a signal that even purely secular education in the realm of values might violate constitutional standards. As one observer put it, "Many teachers and administrators apparently assumed that since such precepts were bound up with all great religions, they fell under the Supreme Court's prohibitions."[9]

Legal efforts to broaden the rights of children had even more chilling effects on moral education. Often equating the dependency of children with the oppression of other social groups, a number of activists in the 1960s and 1970s sought to broaden the due-process rights of students and curtail the traditional latitude schools had enjoyed in enforcing their codes of behavior. Although courts stopped far short of giving students the rights of adults, they were intrusive enough to accentuate an already debilitating fear of litigation. Increasingly educators abandoned elaborate codes of conduct that had once provided a powerful tool for moral education and adopted instead only the rules that were essential to school order. Thus what had once been a way to teach honesty, respect for legitimate authority, and a host of other values now became only a mechanism to enforce a kind of legal minimum of proper behavior.

Moral education, of course, did not disappear altogether in the schools. Many teachers still put a moral point on their lessons, and even the newest textbooks provided a significant sample of the old verities. Some schools continued to provide an ethos in which character was encouraged and moral questions were examined. Moreover, even schools that avoided questions of personal morality often continued to explore the moral dimensions of the great public issues of the day. Yet, the trend was in the other direction. Working to create or preserve peace among their competing and often quarreling constituencies, educators avoided controversial moral questions and elevated tolerance into the primary value of the school. Fearful of charges of imposition, they backed away from anything that might be labelled indoctrination. Wary and anxious, they lowered their expectations for student behavior and sought to purchase harmony by providing a curriculum broad enough to meet the interests of every conceivable constituency.[10]

What was lost in these decades was not so much the ability of the individual teacher to raise moral issues—determined and skillful people could still manage that. Rather what was lost was an atmosphere that supported moral education as a primary goal of the school. When particular teachers sought to cultivate character, they worked in the vacuum of an institution that had lost its commitment to the idea. No longer were their efforts systematically supported by the code of student conduct, by the endorsement or acquiescence of parents, by the behavior of the administration, or by the general ethos of the school. More likely their efforts were

scrutinized by interest groups or parents, sanitized by nervous colleagues or principals, or even challenged by the courts.

By the end of the 1970s, moral education had reached a historic low point in the nation's public schools. What had for more than three centuries been a central responsibility of the school had now become peripheral and problematic. Some critics—Gerald Grant, for example—feared that public schools had become so constrained by federal supervision and so bureaucratic in their own organization that they were incapable of creating an ethos to support moral education.[11] Others believed that the decline of moral education had contributed to a significant erosion of the standards of both public and private conduct and warned ominously that the failures of public education might well foretell the failure of civilized society itself. Although many Americans of the 1960s and 1970s witnessed the weakening of moral education with relative equanimity, many others were sufficiently alarmed that they mounted major efforts either to restore what had been lost or to create entirely new schemes to provide moral instruction to the nation's youth.

The Quest for Revival, 1965-Present

Even as schools seemed to move inexorably away from moral education and educational leaders focused increasingly on other agendas, a handful of intellectuals together with a large number of less powerful Americans sought to spark a revival of interest in matters of character and conduct. Representing a range of disparate groups, these Americans worked along independent, sometimes competing, lines to restore moral education of one kind or another to the nation's public schools. Although some people had resisted the decline of moral education throughout the postwar era, the efforts to spark a revival gained an important place in educational discourse only in the mid-1960s, when some theorists developed entirely new approaches to moral education and others began an aggressive campaign to restore older schemes to their once lofty place in the public school. Although these reformers worked against the tide of events, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, their efforts offered at least the possibility that the fate of moral education in the schools had not yet been finally sealed.

The most daring proposals for the revival of moral education came from two groups of theorists who accepted the notion that traditional approaches to moral education were outmoded. In the spirit of the day, these theorists were wary of schemes that smacked of indoctrination or that emphasized the transmission of ancient wisdom. Especially critical of virtue-centered approaches to character education, they emphasized instead the process of moral decision-making and the importance of individual freedom and autonomy. One group proposed a scheme that would provide moral education though a process of helping students clarify their

values; the other favored a program that would stimulate growth in the capacity of students for moral reasoning. Both groups believed that their open-ended approaches offered a moral education that was consistent with contemporary American commitments to personal autonomy and diversity of lifestyles.

Values Clarification. Of these two new approaches to moral education, values clarification had the earliest impact on educational practice. Developed first by Louis E. Raths, Merrill Harmin, and Sydney B. Simon, who published their volume *Values and Teaching* in 1966, and modified later by Howard Kirschenbaum and others, values clarification offered a clear, comprehensible, and immediately appealing program, especially to those who had grown weary of traditional approaches.[12] Because its developers provided a wealth of instructional materials and pedagogical advice, values clarification was easily transported into the schools. A wide variety of teachers, but especially those in the social studies, added the values clarification exercises to their courses, and the program spread rapidly throughout the late sixties and early seventies.

Like the progressives, values clarificationists were impressed by the situational character of moral decision making. They denied that any one set of values could possibly obtain at all times and in all places. In a world of constant change, children needed not to learn a set of fixed values but rather a process of valuing. This was especially the case in the contemporary era when the pace of change seemed to increase exponentially and the range of options open to the young was wider than ever before. What made the matter especially pressing to these reformers was their sense that the troubles of youth in modern America stemmed not from emotional disturbances but rather from the difficulty of choosing values. Drawing heavily on the widespread concern in the early sixties about inability of individuals to develop feelings of authenticity and commitment, the proponents of values clarification sought to help the young find a sense of direction in their personal values and develop a relationship with the society that was *"positive, purposeful, enthusiastic, proud."*[13]

Especially in their earliest formulations, values clarificationists emphasized the personal and individual nature of valuing. In their view, the modern world offered an extraordinary variety of values from which to choose, and like a consumer in the supermarket, "each person has to wrest his own values from the available array."[14] "Could it be, we wonder," asked Raths, Harmin and Simon rhetorically, "that the pace and complexity of modern life has so exacerbated the problem of deciding what is good and what is right and what is worthy and what is desirable that large numbers of children are finding it increasingly bewildering, even overwhelming, to decide what is worth valuing, what is worth one's time and energy?" The question defined the premise that underlay their whole scheme: that children needed to learn a process of choosing values that would provide them with a sense of purpose in a world perplexingly full of options.[15]

To help the bewildered young find their way, values clarificationists proposed that teachers use nonindoctrinative and nonjudgmental methods to help students discover and refine their values. They neither prescribed the values to be taught nor even insisted on the teaching of "moral" values; instead they defined values as preferences in all realms of life. The teacher was to stimulate thought and to encourage a process of valuing that, in the scheme of Raths, Harmin, and Simon, involved choosing freely, choosing from among alternatives, choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative, prizing and cherishing, acting upon choices, and repeating the actions.[16]

To help teachers in this task, the early leaders of the values clarification movement and many of their disciples offered a rich set of materials and a wealth of practical advice. They proposed three specific approaches to the task of values clarification: dialogue, in which teachers asked questions of individual students to help them clarify their values; value sheets, written statements describing dilemmas or situations followed by questions to be answered privately by students; and group discussions, which might be organized around pictures without captions, stories, or scenes from a current movie. Guide books for teachers offered detailed advice for every strategy: lists of clarifying questions, problems and questions for value sheets, and an array of exercises for group discussion.

In all of these activities teachers were expected to avoid imposing their own values on students. Where honesty and openness compelled them to reveal their views, teachers were to make clear that their values were personal and might not be desirable for others. As Raths et al. sternly put it to the teachers: "We all have different experiences and outlooks, and we should all select values that are individually suitable." The primary function of teachers was not to dwell on their own values but rather to elicit the views of students and to respond to them without "moralizing, criticizing, giving values, or evaluating. The adult excludes all hints of 'good' or 'right' or 'acceptable' or their opposites." The atmosphere was to be "permissive and stimulating, but not insistent."[17] Although supporters of values clarification resisted the analogy, the role of the teacher in their scheme resembled nothing so closely as the role of the humane therapist dealing with a client struggling to find a personal path in a bewildering world.[18]

Despite the appeal of such a nondirective approach, values clarification engendered harsh criticism from the first. The most persistent charge was that it encouraged ethical relativism. By focusing on the process of valuing and by uncritically validating individual preferences, critics charged, values clarification muddied the difference between moral principles and personal preferences and encouraged students to think that all moral positions were equally valid. "Values clarification," declared philosopher Kenneth A. Strike, "makes all moral principles into values and values into matters of personal preference. Its having done so, the enforce-

ment of any value can only be an act of arbitrary will."[19] The danger was that students emerged from the process with no sense of how to deal with moral conflict or establish moral priorities. A sense of authenticity or commitment was no substitute for the ability to make difficult moral decisions.

Not all critics were convinced that values clarification was itself entirely value-free. Some found in the scheme dangerous possibilities for invasion of privacy, emotional manipulation, and even moral indoctrination. Skeptical that schools could be entirely neutral, they feared that unsuspecting students would be led to accept the biases of teachers or peers. The subtlety of the methods only enhanced the possibility of effective imposition. Moreover, some of the materials distributed by values clarificationists seemed to be far from free of political bias. One critic, William Casement, provided an example: "In an exercise entitled 'What one person can do,' students are instructed to list 'ten things they can do for the environment.' Built into the exercise, because of the way it is worded, is a bias in favor of environmental preservation. This value must be accepted before one makes the list. Students who participate in the exercise are being subtly led to accept a specific content."[20]

The gentlest critique of the new scheme was articulated best by philosopher Andrew Oldenquist, who suggested that beneath the surface relativism of the values clarificationists lay a romantic faith that "people will be naturally kind, honest, fair, diligent, and so on, if only they are stroked well and are not corrupted or psychologically damaged in some way." Perhaps, Oldenquist surmised, this faith explains why their approach resembled modern psychotherapy. Because they believed that people were "naturally good—as it were, naturally civilized—they believed that moral education, as most people understand the notion, is unnecessary: the wants and preference that they 'clarify' will be good ones—that is, kind, honest, fair, and considerate."[21]

Whatever the presuppositions of the values clarificationists, the scheme's relativistic methods made it an easy target for a variety of critics, ranging from moral philosophers to religious fundamentalists. To many Americans, already disturbed by the moral laxity of the day, values clarification seemed less a remedy than an extension of the problem. Under a barrage of criticism, the scheme lost its hold in the late seventies almost as quickly as it had burst onto the scene in the mid-sixties. Even at its high point the popularity of values clarification had depended largely on the enthusiasm of particular teachers who had simply added it to existing classroom activities instead of finding it a secure place in a reformed curriculum. When criticism grew, enthusiasm quickly waned, and the scheme lost its influence on American education.

Cognitive Developmental Approaches. At the same time that values clarificationists were elaborating their program, other theorists were exploring an approach that emphasized the development of moral reasoning or judgment. Working along parallel lines, a number of philosophers,

psychologists, and educators sought to find a way to refine moral judgment without teaching a specific set of values. Of these theorists Lawrence A. Kohlberg, a Harvard psychologist, won by far the greatest following. His theories of cognitive moral development were bold and conceptually rich, and his work quickly captured the imagination of many intellectuals and educational leaders. From the mid-1960s, when his ideas first became widely known, until the present, Kohlberg's theories have occupied a central place in the discourse about moral education.

Kohlberg's theories are far more difficult to characterize than are the doctrines of values clarification because they changed in significant ways over the years. A restless thinker and active reformer, Kohlberg modified his proposals frequently in response both to criticism and to practical experience with his system. Yet, despite the constant evolution of his ideas, it is possible to identify roughly two stages in his thought: an early stage, in which he emphasized a fairly narrow cognitive approach to moral education, and a later stage in which he endorsed a much more comprehensive approach. Ironically, the early theories have continued to receive more attention than the later ones and may in the end constitute Kohlberg's primary contribution to the debate about moral education.

The early Kohlberg shared some of the preconceptions of the values clarificationists. He feared indoctrination and was more interested in the process of moral decision-making than in the content of moral values. Moreover, he joined in condemning traditional efforts to teach specific values, contemptuously dismissing them as misguided attempts to pawn off on children someone else's "bag of virtues."[22] Yet, Kohlberg had a far more tightly constructed system than values clarificationists, and his scheme focused more narrowly on the purely cognitive dimensions of moral growth. Thus, despite certain common attitudes toward traditional practices, Kohlberg and the clarificationists were competitors rather than collaborators on most issues surrounding moral education in the years after 1965.

Kohlberg's early theories grew out of his doctoral work at the University of Chicago in the late 1950s and owed much to the thought of both John Dewey and Jean Piaget. Fascinated by the notion that moral reasoning progressed through identifiable stages, he used his dissertation to explore the response of youths to certain moral dilemmas. On the basis of this study he posited the existence of six stages of cognitive moral development and in subsequent work concluded that classroom activities could encourage children to advance more quickly to higher stages of reasoning.[23] By the middle 1960s Kohlberg had developed a comprehensive conception of cognitive moral development, and his theories began to attract the interest of a broad range of educators.

The key to Kohlberg's early theories was his notion that children moved in orderly ways through stages of moral reasoning. He posited the existence of six stages grouped in three general levels:

LEVEL I—PREMORAL

Stage 1. Obedience and punishment orientation. Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set. Objective responsibility.

Stage 2. Naively egoistic orientation. Right action is that instrumentally satisfying the self's needs and occasionally other's. Awareness of relativism of value to each actor's needs and perspective. Naive egalitarianism and orientation to exchange and reciprocity.

LEVEL II—CONVENTIONAL ROLE CONFORMITY

Stage 3. Good-boy orientation. Orientation to approval and to pleasing others. Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behavior, and judgment of intentions.

Stage 4. Authority and social-order-maintaining orientation. Orientation to 'doing duty' and to showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. Regard for earned expectations of others.

LEVEL III—SELF-ACCEPTED MORAL PRINCIPLES

Stage 5. Contractual legalistic orientation. Recognition of an arbitrary element or starting point in rules or expectations for the sake of agreement. Duty defined in terms of contract, general avoidance of violation of the will or rights of others, and majority will and welfare.

Stage 6. Conscience or principle orientation. Orientation not only to actually ordained social rules but to principles of choice involving appeal to logical universality and consistency. Orientation to conscience as a directing agent and to mutual respect and trust.[24]

Although Kohlberg refined these stages at several later points in order to clarify or to respond to critics, the notion of discrete stages leading from a relatively primitive, selfish orientation to a universalistic and principled position survived all of his revisions.

Kohlberg's research in Chicago and in various cross-cultural settings convinced him of the universality of moral growth through identifiable stages. He argued: 1. That more than half of any individual's thinking was "at one stage with the remainder at the next adjacent stages (which he or she is leaving or is moving into)." 2. That people always moved sequentially from one level to another without ever skipping a stage. 3. That people rarely regressed. Thus, in attempting to encourage moral growth, educators were working in harmony with a natural tendency of people in all cultures to move upward from lower to higher stages of reasoning. Although few people reached the highest stage, Kohlberg was convinced that some growth could be achieved in almost everyone.[25]

Kohlberg's early pedagogy reflected his understanding of the stages of moral reasoning and his commitment to the importance of the

cognitive dimensions of moral growth. At the core of his method was his belief that students grew through cognitive conflict, especially through argument with students at the next higher stage of development. Such conflict, he believed, created a "sense of disequilibrium about one's own position" and led students to see the advantages of the higher-level approaches. The role of the teacher in this scheme was to provoke the appropriate discussion, often raising probing questions of his or her own in the process. Kohlberg's favorite technique for eliciting the debate was the presentation of hard-case ethical dilemmas. Students were expected to resolve the dilemmas and defend their positions. Teachers gauged the progress of students not by the solutions they developed—the dilemmas could be resolved in a number of ways—but rather by the quality of moral reasoning they used in arriving at their final positions.

By emphasizing the process of moral reasoning rather than the teaching of specific virtues, Kohlberg hoped to avoid the charge of indoctrination. His scheme, he argued was nonindoctrinative in both purpose and method. "First," he wrote, "it is non-indoctrinative because it is not addressed to transmitting specific value-content but to stimulating a new way of thinking and judging. Second, it is non-indoctrinative because it is not imposing something alien on the student. Movement to the next stage is movement in a direction natural to him, it is movement in the only direction he can go." Procedurally the approach was nonindoctrinative because teachers stirred debate and asked questions without ever attempting to impose their own values.[26]

Despite his effort to develop a nonindoctrinative approach to moral education, Kohlberg's system was hardly value-free. His definition of stages and his assumption that higher stages were better than lower stages revealed a clear commitment to a principle of justice. Although that commitment was in Kohlberg's thought from the beginning, he talked about it more freely as concern about indoctrination declined in the 1970s. The principle of justice that informed the highest stages of reasoning, Kohlberg declared in 1975, was drawn from the "liberal or rational tradition running from Kant through Mill and Dewey to John Rawls. Central to this tradition is the claim that an adequate morality is *principled*, that is, that it makes judgments in terms of *universal* principles applicable to all people. *Principles* are to be distinguished from *rules*. Conventional morality is grounded on rules, primarily 'thou shalt nots' such as are represented by the Ten Commandments. Rules are prescriptions of kinds of actions; principles are, rather, universal guides to making a moral decision."[27]

Even after he had clarified his commitment to a principle of justice, however, Kohlberg left open the questions of the connection between moral reasoning and moral action. In response to critics who warned that moral behavior required more than high-level reasoning skills, Kohlberg admitted that "one can reason in terms of principles and not live up to these principles." Yet, he was convinced that mature moral judgement was

a necessary condition for mature moral action. "Moral judgment, he declared, "while only one factor in moral behavior, is the single most important or influential factor yet discovered in moral behavior."[28] By stimulating higher levels of moral reasoning, the school did not guarantee better behavior, but in Kohlberg's view it made a significant contribution to that end.

Despite Kohlberg's claims about the connections between moral reasoning and moral action, it was the narrow focus on cognitive development that engendered the harshest critique of Kohlberg's early theories. Skeptics argued that dealing with hard cases represented only a small part of moral conduct and that students needed both to learn more concrete principles and to acquire good moral habits. They feared that the heavy emphasis on moral discussion neglected the problem of motivation and led to a kind of rhetorical sophistication that gave students the ability to rationalize their actions without inspiring them to behave in principled ways. "It is questionable," declared critic Kevin Ryan, "whether American parents are going to buy an approach to moral education that concentrates exclusively on thinking and has so little to say about how children actually behave. My own concern is the turning of this whole issue of moral education into a word game with few implications for action. Teaching our children how to discourse about complex personal and social issues without helping them in the world of action could be an empty and dangerous victory."[29]

The charge of narrowness struck a responsive chord in Kohlberg, especially as he became more involved in actual educational reform in the 1970s and 1980s. Working in both prisons and troubled schools, Kohlberg came to appreciate the need for moral instruction that went well beyond discussion of dilemmas. "I realize now," wrote Kohlberg in 1978, "that the psychologist's abstraction of moral 'cognition' (judgment and reasoning) from moral action, and the abstraction of structure in moral cognition and judgment from content are necessary abstractions for certain psychological research purposes. It is not a sufficient guide to the moral educator who deals with the moral concrete in a school world in which value content as well as structure, behavior as well as reasoning, must be dealt with. In this context, the educator must be a socializer teaching value content and behavior, and not only a Socratic or Rogerian process-facilitator of development."[30]

Having accepted the need for a more comprehensive moral education than his early scheme provided, Kohlberg proposed a dramatic reform—the creation of "just community schools," schools that operated as democratic communities with students sharing fully in the establishing and enforcing of codes of conduct. Reminiscent of progressive experiments, the just community school sought to use the culture and climate of the school to encourage moral growth. Instead of discussing mythical dilemmas chosen for their complexity and difficulty, students in the new schools wres-

tled with the immediate problems of the community itself. Indoctrination, Kohlberg acknowledged, was inevitable in such a scheme, but he no longer feared indoctrination in a democratic setting. "I now believe," he wrote, "that moral education can be in the form of advocacy or 'indoctrination' without violating the child's rights if there is an explicit recognition of shared rights of teachers and students and as long as teacher advocacy is democratic, or subject to the constraints of recognizing student participation in the rule-making and value-upholding process."[31]

Although the abrupt reversal represented by the just community school quieted critics who had charged Kohlberg with narrowness, it provided additional ammunition for those who accused him of liberal bias. The suspicion that Kohlberg had an agenda akin to the elite liberalism of the 1960s was an old one. "Kohlberg's *Hypothetical Dilemmas for Use in the Classroom*," wrote Andrew Oldenquist, "is simply packed with moral content that flows from his ideals of liberalism, participatory democracy, sexual freedom, and children's rights."[32] The just community school, with all of its neo-progressive trappings, seemed designed to promote those values in an even more compelling way, as conservative critics were eager to point out.

Debate about narrowness and liberal bias dominated discussion of Kohlberg's ideas, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, but in the 1980s several feminist writers raised another concern, namely that Kohlberg's emphasis on justice and rights had a masculine bias to it. Noting that women seemed not to score as well as men on Kohlberg's scale of moral development, they argued that the Kohlberg's system failed to take into account the fact that women went about the process of moral reasoning in a different way. Carol Gilligan, Kohlberg's colleague and most astute feminist critic, believed that women differed from men in several ways: 1. They tended to pay more attention to the effect of actions on relationships. 2. They tended to be more interested in the context of moral decisions. 3. They tended to be more concerned about the resolution of real rather than hypothetical dilemmas. 4. They were more likely to tie moral judgments to feelings of empathy and compassion.[33]

Gilligan believed that the moral development of women could best be understood as a three-stage growth of caring. "In this sequence," she wrote,

> an initial focus on caring for the self in order to ensure survival is followed by a transitional phase in which this judgment is criticized as selfish. The criticism signals a new understanding of the connection between self and others which is articulated by the concept of responsibility. The elaboration of this concept of responsibility and its fusion with a maternal morality that seeks to ensure care for the dependent and unequal characterizes the second perspective. . . . The third perspective focuses on the dynamics of relationships and dissipates the tension between selfishness and responsibility through a new understanding of the interconnection between other and self. Care becomes the self-chosen principle of a judgment that remains psychological in its

concern with relationships and response but becomes universal in its condemnation of exploitation and hurt.[34]

Gilligan's work, along with that of Nel Noddings and others, has stirred a quest for an entirely new approach to moral education, one that would make a central place for an ethic of caring. Such a program, Noddings has argued, would balance the voice of the father, who speaks the language of rights, with the voice of the mother, who uses the language of caring and compassion, and provide a program that would promote the moral growth of men and women alike.[35] This quest is as yet in its infancy, but the scholarship which informs it has already served to raise important questions about the adequacy of Kohlberg's research and about the wisdom of his approach to moral education.

The fate of Kohlberg's ideas—both old and new—is far from clear. Although the use of moral dilemmas has never been a common practice in schools, the idea has not entirely lost its appeal, even in the face of Kohlberg's own declaration of its limitations. Some prominent figures in social studies education, for example, have found promise in Kohlberg's early pedagogy and have tried to make a place for the use of dilemmas in citizenship education. The just community school has also attracted attention, and with the help of a devoted band of Kohlberg disciples, a number of cities have established just community schools of their own. Yet, neither reform has yet had a broad effect on educational practice. Although it is clear that Kohlberg's theories have been more enduring than those of the values clarificationists, it is not yet clear that they will have a lasting impact on educational practice.

Character Education: In Defense of the Virtues. The novelty of both values clarification and Kohlberg's stage theories gave them a special place in educational discourse in the years since the mid-1960s, but the most broad-based efforts to revitalize moral education came from a variety of groups and individuals who favored traditional, virtue-centered approaches, now labelled "character education" to distinguish them from their contemporary competitors. In the style of programs that had once dominated American classrooms, character education emphasized the teaching of specific virtues and the cultivation of good conduct. Although its proponents were not unconcerned with the processes of valuing and moral reasoning, they were far more interested in content than in process.

The defense of character education was remarkable for its breadth and vigor. It was led by two loose collections of supporters, the somewhat marginal constituencies who had defended virtue-centered education since the 1930s, when it had begun to lose its hold, and a newly alarmed group of elite intellectuals and educational leaders. Disturbed by both the erosion of moral education and by what they perceived to be dangers in values clarification and cognitive-developmental schemes, these groups mounted the strongest campaign for virtue-centered education the nation had witnessed since the early twentieth century.

The two groups of supporters rarely acted in concert; rather they worked along parallel lines, bringing different strengths and different perspectives to the common cause of reviving character education. The first group continued an effort that had been carried out before by the likes of Henry Lester Smith and Ernest Ligon, who had fought a long string of battles against progressivism and other forces that threatened to remove virtue-centered moral education from the schools. The effective headquarters for this campaign after the mid-1960s was the American Institute of Character Education (AICE), located in San Antonio, Texas. Heavily financed by private foundations—including that long-time supporter of character education, the Lilly Endowment—AICE operated largely outside mainstream educational circles, but it managed over the years to have a significant effect on many public schools.

The primary activity of AICE was "to write a practical, useful, and workable program to teach the essential traits of character, conduct, and citizenship to the elementary students of our public school system." Like many of the early twentieth-century character education programs, it was organized around a code, called "Freedom's Code" in this case, which extolled the familiar virtues: being honest, generous, just, kind, and helpful; having courage and convictions along with tolerance of the views of others; making good use of time and talents; providing security for self and dependents; understanding and fulfilling the obligations of citizenship; standing for truth; and defending basic human rights under a government of law.[36]

Prepared first in the late 1960s and revised in the 1970s, AICE's Character Education Curriculum was designed for grades K through 6. Provided to schools in kits, the materials included books, filmstrips, story wheels, transparencies, and teachers' manuals. The books differed from standard readers only in their careful and explicit focus on the teaching of virtues. Although they were designed to be used as a part of language arts or social studies courses, if teachers preferred, the authors of the curriculum favored separate time periods for character education: five to ten minutes each day in kindergarten, longer periods for higher grades. Teachers were expected to use a variety of pedagogical techniques—discussion, stories, role playing, projects, case studies, and the like—and to encourage students throughout the school day to practice the virtues they had learned.[37]

Although the Character Education Curriculum attracted relatively little attention in established educational forums, it spread rapidly in elementary schools, reaching as many as 18,000 classrooms in 44 states by the late 1980s.[38] Its effectiveness has been a matter of dispute. Supporters have claimed that it has reduced alcohol and drug abuse, encouraged school attendance, and helped combat vandalism. Skeptics have wondered whether any program that occupied only a few minutes of the school day could have had a substantial impact. Whatever the final resolution of that debate, it seems clear that the Character Education Curriculum has provid-

ed elementary school materials on moral education not easily available from other late twentieth century sources. At the same time, it is questionable whether the materials are extensive enough to restore moral education to a central place in the life of the school.

For the most part, AICE and its supporters have chosen not to participate directly in the modern debate on moral education. Instead they have worked quietly, spreading their traditional gospel through new materials and dealing with teachers and principals directly rather than through the nation's great educational associations. The other group of character education supporters, however, have been lively participants in the contemporary clashes. Indeed, the formidable challenges of the values clarificationists and the Kohlbergians have done much to spur them to action, and they have responded with a searching critique of modern theories and a vigorous, sophisticated defense of virtue-centered character education.

More a cluster of like-minded individuals than a collection of people with direct links to each other, the elite supporters of character education ranged from intellectuals in universities and think tanks to powerful educational leaders. Many, though not all, shared a political and pedagogical conservatism, and their efforts bore greatest fruit in the 1980s when the cultural climate was friendlier than it had been in the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed, in some senses most were involved in an educational counterrevolution, seeking to restore both academic and behavioral standards they believed had been destroyed by the disruptions of the sixties and seventies. Among the most powerful and articulate of the group were William J. Bennett, director of the National Endowment for the Humanities in the early Reagan years, then secretary of the U.S. Department of Education; Bill Honig, superintendent of public instruction in California; and university professors Andrew Oldenquist, Kevin Ryan, James Wilson, and Edward Wynne. By any measure Bennett was the most influential, using his high positions in government as a pulpit from which to preach the need for a revival in character education.

These elite supporters of character education were appalled by the growing "amorality" of the school and blamed it in part for the soaring rates of social pathology among youth in the modern era. They pointed to alarming rates of teenage suicide, crime, drug use, and unwed pregnancies and called for a renewed commitment to moral education. The school, they charged, had done much to encourage toleration and to enhance the rights of minorities, but it had said little or nothing about "individual ethical responsibilities—why we should not murder, rape, assault, or rob our fellow citizens."[39] If schools failed to provide more guidance, they worried, children would look "for group values elsewhere, in the sentimental and violent world of television or in the tumultuous and ethically confused world of their peers."[40]

Neither values clarification nor Kohlbergian schemes offered an effective remedy to the problem. Both were judged to be narrow and

incomplete at best and dangerous at worst. Bennett and others believed that discussion of moral dilemmas might have a place in the high school but argued that a complete character education required much more than study of hard cases. They were even more wary of values clarification, fearing that it would deepen an already dangerous relativism in the society. What was needed, then, was nothing short of a return to virtue-centered character education. "Moral education without justified moral content is most likely to be perceived as a pointless game," wrote Oldenquist. "What we owe to children is strong direction in the actual acquisition of morality, not just chatter about morality."[41] This meant moral education with an emphasis on the virtues and a parallel concern with behavior. It also meant the use of directive as well as nondirective methods of teaching the appropriate values.

The elite supporters of character education did not share the widespread anxieties about imposition that had made moral education so difficult in the 1960s and 1970s. They were convinced that most basic moral values would create little controversy. "The vast majority of us would agree," wrote Honig, "that a good person is generous to others, not miserly or self-absorbed; modestly self-assured, not vain or boastful; faithful, not promiscuous; prudent, not rash or prodigal; reverent to the elderly, not brusque or insolent; optimistic, not envious; forgiving, not vengeful; hospitable, discrete, loving, patient, not hostile, overbearing, cold, or slapdash."[42] The task of finding a wide consensus on fundamental values was not that difficult, argued Bennett, and the time had come to "demystify" the subject and "get down to business."[43]

Bennett, Honig, and others proposed a comprehensive approach to character education, one that began in the early years and continued through college. Like their predecessors in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, they believed that possibilities for moral education lay in every part of the curriculum. "We don't have to reinvent the wheel," wrote Bennett, "And we don't have to add new courses. We have a wealth of material to draw on—material that virtually all schools once taught to students for the sake of shaping character. And this is material that we can teach in our regular courses, in our English and history courses."[44] Stories offered a particularly rich source of moral instruction. Stories were filled with examples of honesty and courage and fidelity, and they connected students to the culture and traditions that provided them their moral moorings.

The clarion call of these reformers was not for a new pedagogy but rather for a return to an older tradition of moral education. Unlike the Kohlbergians and other modern reformers, they sought to emphasize the basic virtues and common values and to avoid the controversial issues of the day. "The formation of character in young people," declared Bennett, "is educationally a different task, and a prior task to the discussion of the great, difficult, controversial disputes of the day. . . . You have to walk

before you can run, and you ought to be able to run straight before you are asked to run an obstacle course or a mine field. So the moral basics should be taught first. The tough issues can, if teachers and parents wish, be taken up later."[45] Similarly, political squabbles had no place in the classroom. Both the left and the right, wrote Honig, had been guilty of undue intrusion in the classroom. "Children should not be taught that all those who oppose the nuclear freeze are warmongers, nor that all those who favor a woman's right to an abortion are murderers."[46]

By taking an aggressive stance on both the teaching of specific virtues and the use of directive pedagogies, the elite supporters of character education opened themselves to the same criticisms that were leveled against their early twentieth century counterparts. Some critics quickly questioned the effectiveness of the approach, harkening back to the Hartshorne and May studies to support their case. The greatest challenge, however, has come on the issue of indoctrination. Not only have critics charged that the scheme promotes conventional morality, but they have raised suspicions about what they perceive to be a conservative political and educational bias that is insufficiently sensitive to the diversity of the society. Kohlbergians have been particularly skeptical. Even though their most recent experiments have embraced some teaching of virtues, they have been careful to contrast the effects of indoctrination in traditional classrooms with the consequences of indoctrination in the democratic settings of the just community school.

Of all the modern movements in moral education, the effect of the effort to restore character education to the schools is the most difficult to measure. Although the use of the materials of AICE provides one index of the effect of the Character Education Curriculum, scholars have yet to find a way to measure the impact of the elite campaign for character education. Every evidence suggests that public school leaders, perhaps emboldened by Bennett and other powerful figures, have become less skittish about moral education, but it is not yet clear that textbooks have been altered to reflect the new emphasis or that teachers have begun to talk about moral issues in the way that their pre-1960 predecessors had done.

Private Alternatives

The vast majority of Americans who worked to revive moral education after 1965 focused their efforts on the public school. Despite the disheartening developments of the 1960s and 1970s, they still believed that reform was possible within the traditional framework of public education. Many others, however, were convinced that the situation in public schools had deteriorated to the point that character education had become an impossibility. Pessimistic about the prospect of reversing the trend, they began to turn to private education, holding out the hope that in that more guarded atmosphere questions of character would receive the attention they deserved.

Interest in private education emerged in a variety of quarters, and it led to expanding enrollments in every kind of private schooling, except Roman Catholic. Between 1965 and 1989, enrollment in nonreligious independent schools rose from 199,454 to 915,106, a gain of 358%, while enrollment in non-Catholic religious schools rose from 595,999 to 1,864,757, an increase of 213%.[47] Not all of this growth is attributable to concern about moral education, since many parents were equally disturbed by declining academic standards in the public schools, but a widespread belief in the ability of private education to shape character figured prominently in the new stature of independent and religious schools.

Independent Schools. Scholars have yet to give systematic study to the growth of nonreligious independent schools, but impressionistic evidence suggests that their reputed superiority in developing character played a significant role in their new popularity. Many of those most distressed about the decline of moral education in public schools pointed with envy to the record of private institutions, where character development was often a primary goal. Because independent schools were less subject to judicial scrutiny and bureaucratic intrusion and because they usually served a less diverse clientele, they had a freer hand in offering courses in religion and ethics and in exercising a careful supervision of student behavior. Especially in elite boarding schools, teachers and administrators were able to set a moral tone that pervaded every facet of school life. For parents who could afford to send their children, the climate of private schools provided an alluring alternative to a troubled public system.[48]

The Christian Day School. The importance of moral education is even clearer in the case of religious schools. Sponsors and parents alike openly expressed their disillusionment with the state of moral education in public schools and established character development as an overriding purpose of their private systems. Thus, the growth in Jewish and Protestant private education roughly paralleled the decline in the moral climate of public schools. Some of the expansion took place in established systems, such as those sponsored by Lutherans, Orthodox Jews, and Mennonites, but the major engine of growth was the creation of Christian day schools by evangelical and fundamentalist Protestants. A nondenominational and largely uncoordinated effort, this movement drew its strongest support from Southern Baptists, Free Will Methodists, Assemblies of God, Nazarines, the Brethren, American Baptists, and a variety of smaller sects and independent congregations.[49]

Before the 1960s, these groups had generally supported public education. Even as their influence waned in the first half of the twentieth century, they chose not leave the public school, but rather to concentrate their energies on retaining a place for religion and moral education. As they won fewer and fewer battles in the 1950s and 1960s, however, many of them finally gave up on public education and turned instead to a solution they had long condemned—the creation of private religious schools. Although

the diffuse character of their movement makes precise figures difficult, the best students of the phenomenon estimate that by 1965 more than 110,00 students attended Christian day schools. By 1989, the number of schools had reached 7,851 (just short of the number of Catholic schools) and enrollments had grown to more than 985,000.[50]

In turning away from the public school, evangelicals and fundamentalists cited both religious and moral concerns. The elimination of prayer, Bible-reading, and other religious exercises from the classroom, along with the teaching of evolution and moral relativism, led them to argue that the public school had elevated secular humanism into an established religion of its own. "For over twenty-five years," wrote evangelist Tim LaHaye, "I have been watching the California school system, in which every evil fad conjured up by the humanists has been instituted. When my daughter was in the ninth grade and my son was in the seventh, I began doing battle with the humanists in our local junior high. Many of the moral convictions and standards I taught my children were ridiculed, and they were subjected to humiliation and scorn by their peers. The vice-principal of that school, a committed humanist, determined to undermine the training of my children against my will."[51]

LaHaye and others of his persuasion traced the influence of secular humanism to John Dewey, and they were especially critical of anything in education that smacked of progressivism. "Protestant influence on public education," declared Paul A. Kienel, executive director of the California Association of Christian Schools, "lost much of its grip during the late '20s and early '30s. During this period, Columbia University became known for its teachers college and for the man who headed the college, philosopher and educator John Dewey, the father of U.S. progressive education. He was a member of the board of the American Humanist Association in 1933—the year it hammered out the first Humanist Manifesto which said that 'faith in the prayer-hearing God . . . is an unproved and outmoded faith.' " Progressive reform, in this view, had initiated a process that eventually rooted out all Christianity from the schools and established in its place a purely secular world view as the religion of public education.[52]

As much as evangelicals and fundamentalists complained about the secularism of public schools, social-scientific studies revealed that parents who sent children to Christian day schools were much more likely to be influenced by the moral tone of public education than by its neglect of religion.[53] The weakening of discipline, the spread of drugs, and the pervasive relativism encouraged them to seek a safer haven for their young, a place where the lessons would "not be at cross purposes with the teachings of the home and the church."[54] The Christian day school was for these parents a refuge from both a culture and an educational system that seemed to assault their values on every front.

Although Christian day schools took a variety of forms, most of them infused every facet of the day's activities with religious and moral

content. Prayer, Bible-reading, spiritual counseling, and careful supervision of conduct were a central part of every Christian day school, although the tone and intensity varied enormously from place to place. Most schools offered a relatively simple curriculum that focused more on the building of character than on preparation for specific vocations, and most hired teachers less for their pedagogical training than for their religious faith and moral stature. Teachers and principals worked closely with families and churches to insure a comprehensive and well-coordinated effort to achieve the goal of educating morally upright and doctrinally sound Christian men and women.[55]

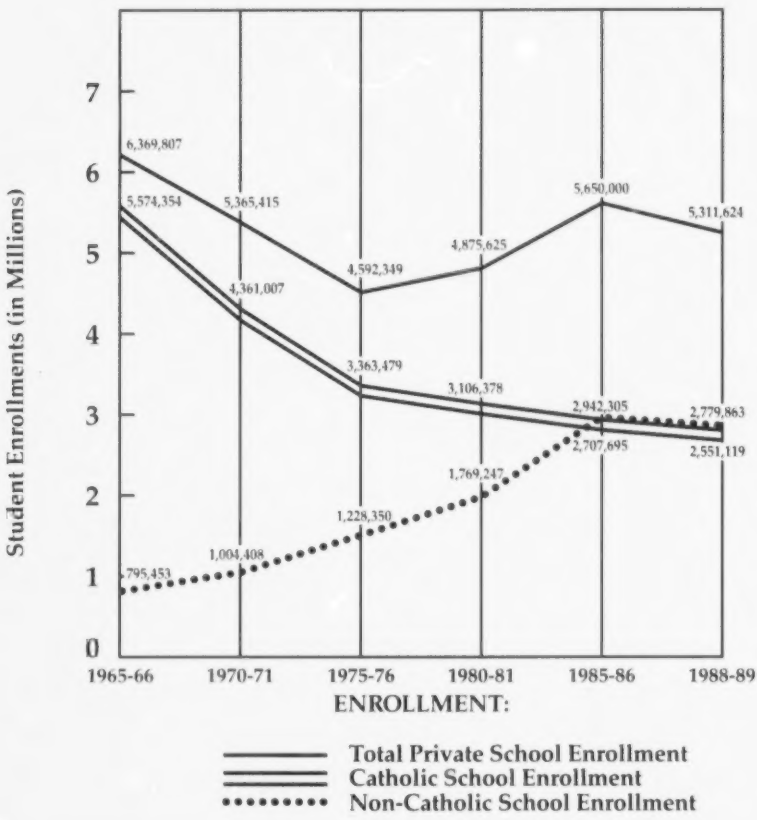
The task of finding appropriate classroom materials was initially a formidable one for Christian schools. Some adopted public school textbooks and left teachers with the task of placing lessons in a Christian context. Others put together materials of their own, sometimes at great expense. The majority of Christian day schools, however, adopted the Accelerated Christian Education program (ACE), a comprehensive scheme that provided schools with virtually every kind of material or service they required, including curricula and learning materials for grades K-12, instructors' manuals, testing kits, furniture, and even a week of training for principals and teachers. Developed and sold by a for-profit corporation in Garland, Texas, ACE made it possible for even small groups of the faithful to establish schools quickly and inexpensively. The scheme emphasized individual learning and provided packets (called PACEs) for students to work through at their own speed. Teachers moved from desk to desk helping students with the highly structured exercises, then at the appropriate time gave each of them a final examination.

The ACE curriculum was a narrow one which emphasized the basic academic subjects and offered little room for choice of studies. The individual learning packets used virtually every lesson as an opportunity to mingle the moral and spiritual with the academic. Like the primers of colonial America, they quoted scripture freely and infused even the lessons in reading and mathematics with moral meaning. Rigidly ideological, the ACE materials promoted patriotism and social conservatism; condemned socialism, liberalism, and humanism; and even hinted strongly that Catholics and Jews were morally inferior. Students who completed twelve years of the ACE curriculum took with them a solid foundation in basic skills (graduates tended to score well on standardized tests) and a thorough grounding in conservative evangelical or fundamentalist values.

The Decline of Catholic Schooling. As enthusiasm for Christian day schools and other forms of Protestant and Jewish private education grew, many people who had once championed public schools now found themselves taking positions that had initially been staked out by nineteenth-century American Catholics. Ironically, at precisely the same time, a growing number of Catholics were moving in the opposite direction, abandoning parochial schools and sending their children to public schools. Enrollment

in Catholic parochial schools, which reached a peak of 5,662,328 in 1964 plummeted to 2,551,119 in 1989, more than offsetting the increase in enrollment in all other private schools. (See Figure 1)[56]

Private School Enrollments by Group, 1965/66-1988/89



Source: Bruce S. Cooper and Grace Dondero, "Survival, Change, and Demands on America's Private Schools: Trends and Policies," *Educational Foundations* 5 (Winter 1991): 59. Used by permission.

The dramatic decline in Catholic commitment to parochial schooling, surely one of the most significant educational developments of the postwar era, was in part a response to the growing atmosphere of tolerance in public schools. The very developments that alienated many Protestants made the public school a far more attractive place to Catholics. The elimination of prayer and Bible-reading, the weakening of Protestant influence, and the growing acceptance of diversity made it possible for Catholic par-

ents to send children to public schools without fearing either discrimination or the imposition of Protestant religious doctrines. The willingness of many large city school systems to provide released time for religious instruction in churches, a practice that became more common in the middle decades of the twentieth century, cinched the decision for a growing number of Catholic families.[57] Although the increasing moral laxity of the public schools was a persistent problem for Catholics, it was more than offset by a sense that public education no longer held a direct threat to the faith or dignity of their young.

As public schools became less hostile places for Catholic students, a number of demographic, social, and religious changes within American Catholicism weakened support for parochial education. In part parochial schools were the victims of Catholic success in American society. As immigrants found a place for themselves in the mainstream of American life, they felt less beleaguered and less in need of parochial education to protect their traditions in a hostile world. Similarly, Catholics who worked their way into the middle classes were more willing to abandon the parochial school. Often their upwardly mobile paths took them to the suburbs where they were sometimes too spread out to sustain parochial schools. As substantial numbers of Catholics were able to escape their ethnic and working-class neighborhoods, they left behind struggling urban churches increasingly unable to bear the financial burdens of supporting parochial education for the desperately poor people who now occupied America's largest cities.[58]

Accompanying the social success of Catholics was a growing cultural and religious restiveness. Many Catholics shared in the general impatience with personal restraints in the postwar era, and they were increasingly willing to criticize the church's position on such issues as papal infallibility and artificial birth control. Especially after the Second Vatican Council, Catholics were less likely to attend church, less likely to abide by the church's sexual ethic, and less likely to accept key church doctrines. Although Catholics continued to hold parochial schools in high regard, they felt increasingly free to send their children to public school, leaving the task of religious education to special weekend and after-hours programs.

As the size and significance of the Catholic system declined, the character of the education it offered also changed. The most important development was the decline of traditional Catholic teaching orders and the increasing tendency of parochial schools to hire lay teachers. In the 1940s, fewer than 10 percent of the teachers were lay people; by 1965, the figure was 27 percent and by 1990 an astonishing 85 percent of teachers in Catholic schools were lay people.[59] The effect was to increase the cost of the schools (speeding the decline of the system) and to make it more difficult for them to offer sophisticated and informed instruction in religious doctrine.

The forces that led to a declining population of priests and nuns available to the parochial schools also contributed to a changing tone in the Catholic classroom. Scholars who have observed Catholic schools in the postwar era have noticed a less insistent approach to religious and moral education and a relaxation in the rules of student conduct. Yet, Catholic educators have shown little interest in modern innovations in moral education. Catholics were among the first and most bitter critics of values clarification, and although Kohlberg has received a more tolerant reception, his ideas have also had relatively little effect on Catholic practice. For the most part, Catholic schools have continued to carry on an older tradition, integrating the religious with the moral and emphasizing the importance of transcendent and universal truths. Thus, despite its declining position in American education, the Catholic parochial system has continued to provide an important alternative tradition in moral education—a tradition that has in the past quarter of a century inspired imitation by groups that were once its bitterest critics.

Patterns of Change in Higher Education

By 1945 the decline of moral education was a well-established trend in colleges and universities. In the two decades that followed, the decline continued, slowly at first, then dramatically. The long-term trend was a product of a variety of forces including the explosion of knowledge, the splintering of the curriculum, the creation of professional studies, the growing emphasis on research, and the influence of positivism. Nothing in the immediate postwar era worked to alter the impact of these forces and, in most respects, events of the 1940s and 1950s only accelerated the earlier trend. The growing prestige of science and technology, the military and economic competition with the Soviet Union, and the increasing demand for professional training all served to deepen commitments to research and specialization and, in the minds of many, to confirm the wisdom of positivism.

The reticence to provide moral education or even to engage in the serious discussion of values grew throughout the 1940s and 1950s on college and university campuses. As the prestige of scientific knowledge continued to rise, talk of morality seemed increasingly soft and sentimental. Social scientists found in the prosperity of the postwar years an affirmation of their positivism and talked hopefully about an end to ideology and the dawn of a world uncluttered by doctrine and moral dispute. The culture of the campus, like the culture of the wider society, still recognized the difference between heroic and contemptible behavior, but it forbade public discussion of the values that underlay such judgments and treated morality instead as a purely personal and private matter.[60]

The increasing absence of moral discourse on the college campus contributed to the growth of both skepticism and relativism among stu-

dents. As Derek Bok has pointed out, college life in these years did much to shatter the dogmas that students brought to campus but little to help them reconstruct a more mature set of beliefs. "In a world in which so many norms were being challenged and student bodies were growing ever more diverse," wrote Bok, "educators found it hard to help inquiring undergraduates to replace their discarded dogmas with a new set of moral values. Instead, professors concentrated more and more on conveying knowledge and imparting skills, leaving students free to fashion their own beliefs and commitments amid the multiple distractions of campus life."[61] Lacking forums in which to test their values, students failed to acquire the capacity to judge ethical systems and developed instead a growing sense of moral relativism.

In the face of these developments, embattled defenders of moral education continued earlier efforts to stem the tide. For the most part they proceeded along lines that had been charted in the first four decades of the century. Progressives still argued for ethics courses that addressed normative questions and worked hard to promote the spread of special offerings to professional schools that had not responded to earlier urgings. In the 1950s their efforts received unexpected support from a growing interest in existentialism and religion. The work of such theorists as Satre, Heidegger, Tillich, Barth, Buber, and Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr gave a new impetus to the discussion of normative questions, and the dramatic growth of religion departments provided an array of scholars who, in this era at least, were eager to engage in discourse on the ethical issues of the day.

Champions of general education were also active in the 1940s and 1950s, continuing their efforts to use the humanities as a way to restore moral and civic education to the college and university. The starting point for their postwar activities was the report of a Harvard committee appointed by President James Conant to reexamine the role of general education in the undergraduate curriculum. The report, entitled *General Education in a Free Society*, was published in 1945.[62] Reflecting sentiments that would later appear in *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools*, the Harvard committee argued for a core of courses that would preserve basic American and Western values at a time when free, democratic societies were threatened by the specter of totalitarianism. Basically a moderate document, the report did not engage the fundamental issues raised by positivism or challenge the standing of scientific inquiry; instead it simply tried to preserve a balance in the curriculum and insure that students would acquire the values considered essential to the survival of free society.

Despite their valiant efforts, defenders of moral education remained on the defensive throughout the 1940s and 1950s. By the late 1960s they were in full-scale retreat. Not only had philosophical analysts finally captured the study of ethics, but as Douglas Sloan has pointed out, the undergraduate course had become "more isolated than ever within the college curriculum," an attractive offering only to "philosophy majors and

the stray student from other fields seeking to fulfill a humanities requirement."[63] General education fared little better. Although the Harvard report had encouraged some tightening of distribution requirements, few institutions made serious efforts to create a well-integrated core of courses to provide moral and civic education. By the 1960s even the distribution requirements were weakened as colleges and universities sought to respond to every need for specialized training and every call for social relevance.

Accentuating these trends in the 1960s were many of the same forces that had led public schools to abandon moral education. Relativism was even more pervasive in higher education than in secondary and elementary schools, and it thwarted efforts to define a body of essential values or create a core of required courses. Similarly, distrust of authority and suspicion of rational discourse were rampant on college campuses, making it difficult for institutions to offer the kind of moral instruction that either the progressives or the supporters of general education sought to provide.

The intellectual and curricular chaos of the 1960s and 1970s left many old champions of ethics and liberal studies in dismay. Yet, just beneath the stormy surface of campus life in those tumultuous years, normative questions were beginning to receive more serious consideration than at any time in more than a generation. The very events that brought disorder to the campus—the civil rights movement, the war in Vietnam, concerns about the environment—also gave birth to a new vigor in moral discourse. Subsequent concerns about the conduct of public officials and about the ethical dilemmas facing professionals, especially in medicine, reenforced the emerging interest in moral questions.

The revival of moral discourse owed something to the efforts of both students and faculty. Student radicals of the 1960s and early 1970s broke sharply with the positivist ethos of the 1950s and portrayed political issues in stark, moral terms. Their demand for relevance in academic offerings, while leading to a further fragmentation of the curriculum, also resulted in the creation of classes that dealt with the most pressing moral issues of the day. Professors, perhaps drawing inspiration from their students, also began to show a new boldness in speaking to moral questions in both their research and their teaching. This was especially the case in ethics, where such figures as John Rawls and Robert Nozick defied the canons of philosophical analysis and wrote powerful works on fundamental normative questions.[64]

Although the decline of student radicalism and political controversy in the late 1970s and 1980s lowered the volume of moral debate in colleges and universities, ethical issues continued to receive a significant hearing in these decades. The most popular forums were courses in professional ethics, which had undergone a dramatic revival, and special classes on particular issues, such as the justifications for war, gender equity, and cultural pluralism. Unlike the traditional undergraduate ethics course, these classes were more likely to deal with practical dilemmas than

with ethical theories and to engage a significantly broader range of students.

The revival of ethics in institutions of higher learning received important theoretical support from the research on moral development in the 1960s and 1970s. Of particular significance was the work of William G. Perry, Jr., which argued that the ethical development of college students moved through stages or "positions" from an "absolutistic right-wrong outlook" through an acceptance of relativism and finally to the development of mature commitment.[65] The work of Lawrence Kohlberg, though different in detail and focus, reinforced the notion of developmental stages and offered a powerful justification for the new emphasis on the discussion of practical dilemmas. Although Kohlberg's own reform efforts were focused on secondary schools, his theories applied equally well to moral education in the college years and did much to supply a rationale for the renewed emphasis on ethics.

As the study of ethics flourished on college campuses, most defenders of moral education took heart. Others, however, were skeptical. They saw in the modern ethics movement a subtle defense of relativism and called for a return to liberal studies. "The existence of 20,000 practical ethics courses," declared one critic, "does not mean we in the university are serious about the moral education of our students. If we were really serious, we would see that our students all got a substantial grounding in the liberal arts and sciences."[66] Even many supporters of the ethics movement, saw it only as a first step in restoring moral education to the college campus. Harvard president Derek Bok, for example, believed that the study of ethics had to be combined with other activities: "discussing rules of conduct with students and administering them fairly, building strong programs of community service, demonstrating high ethical standards in dealing with moral issues facing the university, and, finally, being more alert to the countless signals that institutions send to students and trying to make these messages support rather than undermine basic norms."[67]

Whatever the limitations of the new ethics courses, their emergence has been the single most important result of the effort to restore moral education to higher learning in the past quarter century. Other approaches have as yet borne little fruit. Surprisingly, champions of virtue-centered moral education have done far more to reform elementary and secondary programs than to revive the humanities in colleges and universities. Although they have been effective critics of the ethics movement, defenders of the humanities have done little to define a program of their own or to offer a realistic hope for a revival of general education. Their calls for a return to the study of the humanities have been vague and have left unanswered the questions that plagued earlier supporters of liberal culture and general education. Similarly, those who have sought to create a campus ethos that would encourage moral development have made only marginal advances since the 1960s. Although higher education in the 1980s

was arguably more open to more to moral discourse than it had been in the 1950s, specific programs to cultivate character or encourage civic concern have been scattered at best. Except in church-affiliated colleges or in institutions with long traditions of social activism, campus life has continued to have far more to do with recreation than with moral development or community service.

The Present Moment in Moral Education

As Americans entered the decade of the 1990s, the fate of the effort to revive moral education was far from clear. At the level of elementary and secondary schooling at least three general approaches developed in the past quarter of century seemed to offer viable options. The first was to adopt a new approach to moral education in the public school, one that responded to the sensitivities that had led educators of the 1960s and 1970s to back away from traditional schemes. Although values clarification seems to have lost the support of all but a few of its champions, Lawrence Kohlberg's proposals continue to generate interest. So do the relatively new schemes suggested by feminist scholarship.

A second option with significant support as the decade begins is the restoration of a virtue-centered character education. Champions of this approach argue that school leaders of the 1960s and 1970s overreacted to fears of indoctrination and needlessly abandoned moral education. They believe that certain values remain noncontroversial and ought to be taught in the public school to provide youngsters with at least a provisional moral code. Long on the defensive in the twentieth century, proponents of character education have received impressive support from a range of intellectuals and educational leaders in the past three decades and may now be in their strongest position since the 1930s.

A final possibility suggested by the events of the recent past is the most dramatic—namely the abandonment of a single system of public education in favor of a scheme that offered public support for private schools in hopes that these institutions would succeed where public schools have failed in the development of character. Although private schools enrolled only slightly more than 11 percent of the school-age population in 1990, these institutions have attracted the growing interest of important American policymakers. Scholarly studies which have argued the superiority of private schools in building character, in increasing academic performance, and even in achieving racial integration have given these institutions a new stature and have led many important intellectual and political leaders to search for ways to offer public support. Most of the proposals have involved some kind of direct aid to parents, in the form of money or vouchers, to allow them to choose schools, even religious schools, for their children. Should these proposals become policy Americans would in effect abandon the ancient hope for a single system of nonsectarian schooling and

entrust the moral education of the young to a diverse group of private institutions.

The options open to institutions of higher learning are less clear. The most encouraging development to most supporters of moral education has been the recent revival of courses in ethics. Yet, despite their popularity in professional schools, ethics courses have not found an entirely secure place in the undergraduate curriculum. Philosophy departments, to be sure, have continued to offer courses in ethics, but many of the new, issue-oriented classes have been staffed by professors from other fields. While the involvement of diverse disciplines has done much to enliven the study of ethics, it has also made the courses unusually vulnerable to changes in fashion. Without clear departmental sponsorship, the courses have depended heavily on the willingness of members of the faculty to venture beyond the usual disciplinary boundaries and to teach material that may have little to do with their research, a risky business in an academic world that still encourages specialization and expertise. Although ethics teachers have received impressive support from private foundations, especially the Hastings Center (or the Institute for Society, Ethics, and the Life Sciences), they have yet to build the kind of national professional societies that have been so critical to the success of other academic fields.

The precarious place of ethics courses in contemporary colleges and universities is only one of the uncertainties facing those who seek to restore moral education to higher learning. The experience of the past quarter-century has provided little insight into the viability of other approaches. The resurrection of general education, for example, remains one option, but supporters have yet to articulate a specific program or to provoke a serious examination of the idea. The reinvigoration of campus life offers another possibility. The emergence of professionals in student personnel administration make such a program conceivable even in an age when members of the faculty have little time to cultivate the character of their students. Yet, this approach would require a significant redistribution of resources and a drastic change in the texture of student extracurricular life.

It is by no means clear whether Americans will follow the options suggested by the reform efforts of the recent past or move in some entirely new direction, but as the decade begins the interest in moral education appears to be strong. In sharp contrast to the 1960s and 1970s, few Americans dispute the idea that the young should deal with moral questions in schools and colleges. Concern about the conduct of the young, about the ethics of private business people and public officials, and about the just relationships between persons of unequal stations remains strong. Educators who once thankfully abandoned responsibility for moral education now seem open to the idea again. Whether Americans will seize the moment to restore moral education to the agenda of the nation's schools or lose their enthusiasm for the idea again is beyond our ability to know. But few can doubt that the decision will be a fateful one.

Chapter 5: NOTES

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52. Paul A. Kienel, *The Christian School: Why It Is Right for Your Child* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1977), 71. Kienel is incorrect in identifying Dewey as the head of Teachers College. Dewey's primary appointment at Columbia was in the philosophy department.
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54. Kienel, *The Christian School*, 15.
55. For a description of two Christian schools with decidedly different climates, see Rose, *Keeping Them Out*.
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Chapter 6

ERIC Resources on Moral Education: Select Annotated Bibliography

by Vickie J. Schlene

6

The following abstracts and annotations of documents and journal articles from the ERIC database represent an extensive sample of materials written during the last half of the 1980s and early 1990s about moral education.

All of the abstracts appear in *Resources in Education (RIE)*, which is published monthly and is available at libraries throughout the country. The abstracts are intended to briefly describe the contents of documents in general terms or list major portions of the document. It is suggested that the reader either locate the document at a local library's ERIC microfiche collection or order the document through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). The reader may contact EDRS at 7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110, Springfield, Virginia, 22153-2853 or by calling (800) 443-3742.

The journal article annotations appear in *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*, which is also published on a monthly basis and is available at libraries throughout the country. As with the *RIE* abstracts, the *CIJE* annotations aim to briefly introduce the article. The reader should locate the article in a local library or order it through Interlibrary Loan from the local library. Reprints of the articles may also be obtained from University Microfilms International (UMI), 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48106 or by calling (800) 732-0616.

Readers are encouraged to complete their own searches of the ERIC database to discover the most recent materials. Over 2600 new records are being added to the database monthly. Various types of materials are represented in this bibliography, including research reports, conference papers, opinion papers, lesson plans, instructional materials, and curriculum guides. Educators will find these materials a valuable resource for fostering understanding, application, and evaluation of moral education.

Beem, A.L., and D. Brugman. "An Exploration of the Structure of Classroom Behavior during Values Development Lessons." STUDIES IN EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION 11 (1985):339-57. **EJ 328 986**.

Lessons in values development were observed in classes of Dutch students, ages 10-15. A 22-item observation instrument was used to record the amount of classroom time spent on a particular category. Factors which affected students' behavior included nondirective versus directive teaching behavior and certain questioning techniques.

Bell, Darnell. WINNERS: A CULTURALLY-BASED, VALUES CLARIFICATION-ORIENTED, CREATIVE WRITING PRIMARY PREVENTION WORKBOOK FOR THE BLACK CHILD. VOLUME I. Los Angeles:Darnell Black, 1987. **ED 296 783**.

Providing a substance abuse prevention curriculum that is designed to be culturally relevant to black youth, this workbook provides 102 creative writing activities promoting self-esteem, values clarification, feelings validation, cultural awareness, and decision-making skills.

Beller, Edward. "Education for Character: An Alternative to Values Clarification and Cognitive Moral Development Curricula." JOURNAL OF EDUCATION THOUGHT 20 (August 1986):67-76. **EJ 339 190**.

This articles discusses the weaknesses inherent in Sidney Simon's values clarification method and Lawrence Kohlberg's cognitive moral development method, suggesting that single class, isolated instruction overlooks the affective, unconscious elements of character formation. It recommends an alternative holistic approach based on John Locke's concept of all education as education for character development.

Bennett, William J. "Moral Literacy and the Formation of Character." NASSP BULLETIN 72(December 1988):29-34. **EJ 381 954**.

This articles compares "moral literacy" to cultural literacy, as both depend on prior knowledge. If we want youngsters to possess admirable character traits, then we must teach them what they are through stories and historical examples. Children cannot be expected to take messages about rules or morality seriously unless they see adults following the same precepts in their daily lives.

Benninga, Jacques S. "An Emerging Synthesis in Moral Education." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 69(February 1988):415-18. **EJ 365 988**.

This articles considers popular approaches to moral and character education in schools. It draws on the work of moral philosophers such as Kant and Kohlberg to construct a synthesis of direct and indirect teaching methods allowing children to make moral choices.

Berghammer, Gretta. TEACHING VALUES THROUGH DRAMA. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Theater Association, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, August 4-7, 1985. **ED 267 453**.

This document describes the "theatre-in-education" technique that aids students in their discovery of values and their value system.

Beyer, Landon E. "Schooling for Moral and Democratic Communities." ISSUES IN EDUCATION 4(Summer 1986):1-18. **EJ 345 240**.

The role of schools in promoting a democratic social order is obscured by confused attempts to embed moral dialog in society and by the loss of communities wherein such discourse prompts social action. Schools can assist by realizing the full participative decision making that reconstitutes democracy as a cultural form.

BUILDING CHARACTER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS. NSBA LEADERSHIP REPORTS, 1987-2. Alexandria, Virginia: National School Boards Association, 1987. **ED 301 941**.

The National School Boards Association proposed to the United States Department of Education a project, "Building Character in the Public Schools," designed to enhance character development in the schools through involvement of more than 15,00 local school boards in this country. This document outlines the programs goals and chapters.

Calabrese, Raymond L. "Ethical Leadership: A Prerequisite for Effective Schools." NASSP BULLETIN 72(December 1988):1-4. **EJ 381 947**.

Ethical leadership is the moral component of instructional leadership. Ethical guidelines for principals include respect for all members of society, tolerance for divergent opinions and cultures, equality of persons, and equal distribution of resources. Specific guidelines are provided to help principals exercise effective ethical leadership.

Callan, Eamonn. "Moral Education in a Liberal Society." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 14(January 1985):9-22. **EJ 315 970**.

It is argued that liberalism is rejectable by reasonable people and that inculcating liberal beliefs in the minds of children is, therefore, inconsistent with liberalism. In particular, R.M. Hare's defense of teaching liberal morality as being consistent with liberal morality itself is attacked.

Cavazos, Lauro F. "Teaching Ethics in the Public Schools." NASSP BULLETIN (74 (October 1990): 1-4. **EJ 416 402**.

By abdicating their authority and attempting to be value-neutral, teachers and textbooks have, in effect, become valueless. If the American democratic tradition is to survive beyond the end of this century, American educators must ensure that future generations of all races, religions, and cultural backgrounds respect and honor this country's moral heritage.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN THE 90s: A REAFFIRMATION OF VALUES. TEACHING VALUES IN ARIZONA SCHOOLS. THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON VALUES IN EDUCATION FOR

THE STATE OF ARIZONA. Phoenix, AZ: Arizona State Department of Education, 1990. **ED 327 779**.

Pursuant to a request from the Arizona State Board of Education, an interagency task force was formed in the fall of 1989 to examine the issue of values instruction in Arizona schools. This document begins with a summary of the resulting report, along with a list of suggested common core values, recommendations for development and implementation of a values instruction program, and an historical perspective on values instruction.

Childres, Kevin. REFLECTIONS ON MORAL EDUCATION. RESEARCH IN BRIEF. Synopsis of the report of the Conference on Moral Education and Character. Washington, DC, September 1987. **ED 317 485**.

This report highlights the views of participants from a variety of fields. Moral education concerns learning about good conduct. It is about the development of character, the stable qualities of a person that are revealed in his or her actions. Parents and teachers both play an important role in educating the children. It also tells how moral education can be introduced into the curriculum.

Clarken, Rodney H. EDUCATION, JUSTICE, AND UNITY: PREREQUISITES FOR PEACE. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco, California, March 27-31, 1989. **ED 310 041**.

The absence of peace is one of the greatest threats to the continued existence of life on this planet. Education is vital to eliminating prejudice, which if the foundation of injustice, disunity, and war. This report identifies the lack of morals as one of the four main causes of prejudice/injustice/disunity/war.

Coles, Robert. "The Moral Life of Children." EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP 43(December-January 1985-86):19-25. **EJ 329 627**.

This article describes interviews with high school teachers and students from New Hampshire, Illinois, and Georgia in which the author asked teachers and students to define the term "character" as part of an investigation into the moral lives of children.

Coles, Robert. "The Moral Life of America's Schoolchildren." TEACHER MAGAZINE 1(March 1990): 42-49. **EJ 417 473**.

This article describes a comprehensive national survey of children's moral values which asked fourth through twelfth grade children about moral issues. The results revealed that American schoolchildren act on moral assumptions, although the assumptions are not uniform and are, therefore, difficult for teachers to address.

Copeland, Bonnie S., and Mary Ellen Saterlie. "Designing and Implementing a Values Education Program." NASSP BULLETIN 74(October 1990): 46-49. **EJ 416 409**.

After undertaking a study of values education and ethical behavior in Fall 1982, the Baltimore County (Maryland) Public Schools formed committees involving more than 2,000 people. Innovative projects involving computer ethics, coaches as role models, academic honesty, and "culture nights" to celebrate the community's ethnic backgrounds were the result.

Dobert, Ranier. "Prospects of Kohlberg-Oriented Research on Moral Development." ZEITSCHRIFT-FUR-PADAGOGIK 33(August 1987):491-511. **EJ 358 579**.

This article offers a critical analysis of Kohlberg's moral development theory. Claims that the theory misses a level of operative structures and needs to have its stage descriptions revised. Concludes by considering instructional implications.

Edelstein, Wolfgang. "Lawrence Kohlberg's Socratic Paradox." NEW DIRECTIONS FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT 47(Spring 1990): 93-98. **EJ 412 198**.

This article draws an analogy between Kohlberg and Socrates in the substance and procedure of moral education from a societal perspective.

Erlandson, Ray S., et al. "A Curriculum for Character Education." PRINCIPAL 65(January 1986):32. **EJ 331 345**.

This articles describes a program called the Character Education Curriculum developed by the American Institute for Character Education that is the most widely used plan for teaching the basic traits of character, conduct, and citizenship.

Frazer, M.J., and A. Kornhauser, eds. ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SCIENCE EDUCATION. Elmsford, New York: Pergamon Press, 1986. **ED 283 683.**

Questions of ethics and social responsibility are considered by many to be important issues in science education. Teachers are being exposed to the papers which deal with global problems and values. This book contains papers which deal with this apparent dilemma, raising questions about the responsibilities of science educators in the teaching of ethics with regard to science and technology.

Friedman, Batya. MORAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, Massachusetts, April 16-20, 1990. **ED 321 737**.

This report asks the questions, "How can understanding the social context of computing help us—as parents, educators, and members of government and industry—to educate young people to become morally responsible member of an electronic information community?"

Parameters for an educational approach to promote responsible computer use are outlined.

Gardner, Eileen. "Do Schools Contribute to Declining Moral Standards?" USA TODAY 114 (September 1985):55-56. **EJ 321 692**.

The severity of classroom discipline problems, including insolence, disobedience, and the refusal of students to apply themselves, has been well documented. One thing that schools can do to check the present moral decay of youth is to see the God and man's dependence on Him are acknowledged openly in the classrooms.

Gates, Brian. "Religion, Morality, and Education—Constitutionally Incongruent?" JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 19(October 1990): 147-58. **EJ 426 393**.

This article explores three constitutional responses to religion and the respective consequences for moral education. It explores the place of England and Wales on this spectrum, and examines the effects of the 1988 Educational Reform Act on moral/religious education. It also highlights the role of reason in resolving autonomy/authority conflicts in religious education.

Grant, Gerald. "Bringing the "Moral" Back In." NEA TODAY 7(January 1989):54-59. **EJ 404 549**.

Moral education must be emphasized in schools, but first the school's proper role in this endeavor has to be determined. Teachers must learn to take responsibility for addressing moral issues that are proper to the functioning of an educational community, conveying the organic nature of ideals without degenerating into indoctrination.

Grant, Gerald. EDUCATION, CHARACTER, AND AMERICAN SCHOOLS. ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY. REPRINT 32. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1981. **ED 285 785**.

The intellectual and moral climate of a school is related to the nature of authority. It is the way that authority is instituted as well as the manner in which it is exercised that shapes the intellectual and moral character of the school. This report stresses the importance of the rethinking of the nature and purpose of public education. A provisional morality that expresses some of the common beliefs of a democratic pluralistic society must be reinvented.

Greenfield, William D., Jr. "The Moral Socialization of School Administrators: Informal Role Learning Outcomes." EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION QUARTERLY 21(Fall 1985):99-119. **EJ 329 616**.

This article offers a conceptual framework regarding the technical and moral socialization of school administrators; identifies processed and conditions associated with their moral socialization; and concludes with a brief discussion of the implications of these conditions for the

study and development of recruitment, selection, and preparation practices in educational administration.

Greer, Peter R., and Kevin Ryan. "How to Answer the Hard Questions about Moral Education." AMERICAN SCHOOL BOARD JOURNAL 176(September 1989):26-28. **EJ 395 087**.

Many young people do not understand nor have they acquired the moral values and character traits they need to be good citizens. What is taught in moral education is the responsibility of the local school board. Answers six questions and provides information about the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character at Boston University.

Hare, William. "Open-Mindedness in Moral Education: Three Contemporary Approaches." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 16(May 1987):99-107. **EJ 357 358**.

This article examines three contemporary approaches to moral education, (values clarification, situation ethics, and critical issues), to see how far they satisfy the ideal of open-mindedness. It finds that while all three seek to avoid indoctrination and present different alternatives to traditional moral education with its emphasis on absolute moral values, all three are still inadequate in the area of open-mindedness.

Harmin, Merrill. "Value Clarity, High Morality: Let's Go for Both." EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP 45(May 1988):23-30. **EJ 373 379**.

Although it is often it is often useful to accept students' value statements nonjudgmentally, values clarification theory recommends that teachers go beyond moral leadership and help students learn to think through their personal values and understand that it takes to live a value-directed life. Methods to promote and clarify our "heritage of moral values" are discussed.

Harrington-Lueker, Donna. "A Fifth-Grader is Accused of Trying to Poison her Principal." EXECUTIVE EDUCATOR 13(June 1991): 25-26. **EJ 426 953**.

When youth lack a value system, violence becomes an acceptable activity with no need for accountability. The traditional close-knit family that taught youngsters right from wrong and expected them to act accordingly has disappeared. Ameliorative school programs in South Carolina and Chicago are described. A sidebar describes Robert Cole's research on ethically adrift students.

Hawkins, Michael, and Guy A. Larkins. "Character Education in Georgia Public Schools." GEORGIA SOCIAL SCIENCE JOURNAL 18(Summer 1987):1-3. **EJ 358 551**.

This article briefly reviews the history of character education. It states that schools should indoctrinate two kind of values: personal-ethical standards such as truthfulness, kindness, and diligence; and the

political-ethical values of our democracy such as freedom of speech, due process, and equality. It concludes by stating character education requires patience in seeing results, but the obligation to teach it remains.

Hodge, R. Lewis. A MYRIAD OF VALUES: A BRIEF HISTORY. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California, March 27-31, 1989. **ED 307 218**.

This report argues that a straightforward approach concerning what values will be taught is an appropriate policy. Three assumptions have been accepted in this essay.

Honig, Bill. "Teaching Values Belongs in Our Public Schools." NASSP BULLETIN 74(October 1990): 6-9. **EJ 416 403**.

Ethical instruction is a difficult task in any society, but doubly so in the U.S., because our culture stresses individual development over commitment to the group. Attention to school bonding, special ethics instruction, California's Community of Caring project, and community service opportunities are powerful strategies to aid moral development.

Hooker, Brad. "A Reply to Callan's "Moral Education in a Liberal Society." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 14(January 1985):23-32. **EJ 315 971**.

Callan argues that liberalism is rejectable by reasonable people and that inculcating liberal beliefs in children's minds is, therefore, inconsistent with liberalism. In this reply, the author argues that making distinctions between different senses of "reasonable" and "liberalism" undermines some of Callan's main arguments.

Hunter, William, and Michael Pratt. "What to Teach in Moral Education: Lessons from Research on Age and Sex Differences in Adult Moral Reasoning." JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT 22(August 1988):103-17. **EJ 376 670**.

This article summarizes conclusions from research on sex and age differences in moral reasoning. It finds men focused on rights and women on responsibility, and older adults are better able to articulate their moral positions though no longer engaged in moral growth. Suggests changes in the content and pedagogy of moral education.

Hyland, J.T. "Instruction, Rationality and Learning to be Moral." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 15(May 1986):127-38. **EJ 338 169**.

This article defines rationality and morality and contends that learning to be moral must be based on more than value-neutral approaches which stress process over content. It argues that instruction in moral principles need not be simple bald exposition, but must include proofs,

evidence, and arguments, making it nondogmatic and fully compatible with the principles of rationality.

Irwin, Claire C. WHAT RESEARCH TELLS THE PRINCIPAL ABOUT THE TEACHING OF VALUES. Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Secondary School Principles, Anaheim, California, March 4-8, 1988. **ED 303 476**.

An overview of values education is outlined. The semantic problems relating to the language of values/character education are identified, and some of the extant philosophical postures and controversies are sketched. Eighteen tools for measuring values are listed; 14 of these are briefly described.

Janes, Larry. "An Examination of the Legal Context for Teaching Ethics." NASSP BULLETIN 74(October 1990): 25-30. **EJ 416 406**.

Teaching ethical values is often challenged as an infringement on students' religious rights. This article addresses key questions concerning schools' legal responsibilities, courts' treatment of curriculum-related challenges based on alleged First Amendment violations, and courts' handling of teacher proselytizing or "opting out" cases.

Joseph, Pamela B., and Sara Efron. MORAL CHOICES/MORAL CONFLICTS: SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLTEACHERS. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL, April 3-7, 1991. **ED 332 376**.

Veteran teachers of various ages and levels of experience responded to questionnaires and interviews designed to reveal their perceptions in five thematic areas drawn from historical and contemporary research about teachers as moral agents. The values teachers affirmed and their perceptions of their values are revealed, largely through the use of direct quotations.

Kohn, Alfie. "Caring Kids: The Role of the School." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 72(March 1991): 496-506. **EJ 422 809**.

Character education, according to Martin Buber, goes beyond eliminating classroom behavior problems. Punishment and bribery are extrinsic and ineffective approaches. Helpfulness and responsibility must be taught within the context of a community of people who learn, play, and make decisions together. The Child Development Project helps children learn caring.

Lickona, Thomas. "Four Strategies for Fostering Character Development and Academics in Children." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 69(February 1988):419-23. **EJ 365 989**.

This articles discusses three goals of character development for elementary school children: promoting (1) cooperative relationships and mutual respect; (2) moral agency; and (3) a moral community based on fairness, caring, and participation. It explores teaching strategies for

building self-esteem and fostering cooperation, moral reflection, and participative decision making.

Lickona, Thomas. "Kohlberg and Moral Education: Back to Virtue." COUNSELING AND VALUES 32(April 1988):187-92. **EJ 374 703**.

The author describes his first encounters with psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg and explains how Kohlberg's approach has been blended with other approaches in the development of the author's work on the moral education of children.

Lindsay, Bryan. "A Lamp for Diogenes: Leadership Giftedness and Moral Education." ROEPER REVIEW 11(October 1988):8-11. **EJ 380 145**.

Leadership education is distinguished from leadership training, and moral education from moral indoctrination, in a discussion of the need to educate young gifted leaders in moral excellence. The role of parents is discussed, and parallels drawn between Bloom's Taxonomy and Kohlberg's model of cognitive moral development.

Lipman, Matthew. "Ethical Reasoning and the Craft of Moral Practice." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 16(May 1987):139-47. **EJ 357 362**.

This article holds that ethical inquiry, as a "craft," causes students in this area to be "apprentices," and the classroom a "community of inquiry" wherein the tools, methods, practices, and procedures of the craft are imparted. It states that the generic procedures of reasoning, necessary for moral reasoning, should be taught within the context of philosophy, in the aforementioned community.

London, Perry. "Character Education and Clinical Intervention: A Paradigm Shift for U.S. Schools." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 68(May 1987):667-73. **EJ 352 315**.

In response to changing social norms and "psychosocial epidemics" disrupting children's lives, schools must become more important agents of character development, providing education in civic virtue and personality adjustment. Schools' "damage control" function cannot succeed without involving families and reevaluating existing intervention training and research strategies.

McCarthy, Martha M. "Secular Humanism and Education." JOURNAL OF LAW AND EDUCATION 19(Fall 1990): 467-98. **EJ 419 932**.

This article addresses the allegations that public schools are unconstitutionally promoting secular humanism. It presents perspectives defining secular humanism and explores whether secular humanism is considered a religion under the establishment clause. It also deals with charges by conservative parent groups.

Malikail, J.S., and J.D. Stewart. "Moral Autonomy and Moral Training." JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT 22(August 1988):97-102. **EJ 376 669**.

This article discounts arguments that students should choose their own moral values. It suggests that emphasis on teachers' neutrality in moral education promote an overly rigid separation of fact and value and of moral content and moral form. It considers the formation of early moral habits indispensable to the development of moral reasoning.

Maryland State Department of Education. REPORT OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND VALUES EDUCATION COMMISSION. Baltimore, MD: Maryland State Department of Education, 1983. **ED 271 348**.

In response to the ultimate goal of teaching Maryland students to recognize, relate, assimilate, and apply character and citizenship values, the Maryland Commission Report defines, examines, and recommends suggested objectives to improve and guide the values education program in Maryland.

Meyer, John R. "Democratic Values and Their Development." SOCIAL STUDIES 81(September-October 1990): 197-201. **EJ 419 173**.

This article traces the historical precedents of values development and citizenship education in the United States and Canada. It proposes a framework for democratic values education and explores the teaching methods and classroom environments that promote democratic citizenship education. It also exhorts social studies educators to integrate teaching and learning in citizenship education, infusing values that will sustain democracy.

Mills, Randy K. "Traditional Morality, Moral Reasoning and the Moral Education of Adolescents." ADOLESCENCE 22(Summer 1987):371-75. **EJ 360 466**.

This article examines two positions on schools giving value training to adolescents: teaching moral reasoning and teaching traditional values. It attempts to establish a significant common ground between the two positions. It encourages educators to incorporate elements of both positions in the moral education process.

Moore, Darlene. THE ISSUE OF VALUES EDUCATION. Texas: Texas Woman's University, 1990. **ED 324 526**.

It has become increasingly important for teachers to understand the key issues of values education. Values taught in the formal curriculum and transmitted in the hidden curriculum have a profound effect on the total educational experiences of students. Careful and thoughtful reception and transmission of communication concerning values are skills that assume more and more significance in a rapidly changing world. This paper surveys recent literature in the area of values education.

Morrow, S. Rex. "Values and Moral Education: Revisited." COUNCILOR 47(October 1987):31-33. **EJ 365 349**.

This article discusses the increasing need for inquiry and inductive-learning teaching techniques in the social studies. It encourages the use of values clarification, moral education techniques, and experiential learning to assist students in clarifying and constructing a positive belief system. It challenges social studies teachers to actively work toward solutions to the problems facing students.

New Jersey State Department of Education. REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON DEVELOPING CHARACTER AND VALUES IN NEW JERSEY STUDENTS. Trenton, New Jersey: New Jersey State Department of Education, 1989. **ED 318 974**.

This document presents a report from an advisory council set up by the New Jersey State Department of Education to list and define a common core of values deemed essential to society and acceptable to the majority of New Jersey citizens and to recommend goals and objectives for character education. Four core values to be taught identified by the council are: (1) civic responsibility, (2) respect for the natural environment, (3) respect for others, and (4) respect for self.

Nyberg, David. "Teaching Values in School: The Mirror and the Lamp." TEACHERS COLLEGE RECORD 91(Summer 1990):595-611. **EJ 412 500**.

The teaching of values to students is unavoidable and inevitable. The problem for educators is how to choose wisely what is explicitly taught in the way of values and how to understand and control the implicit moral education in schools and in the communities that support them.

Oldenquist, Andrew. "The Decline of American Education in the '60s and '70s." AMERICAN EDUCATION 19(May 1983): 12-18. **EJ 280 612**.

This articles contends that a pervasive relativistic philosophy, emphasizing supremacy of self-interest and self-expression and eliminating "middle-class values," upgrading, and standards, underlies the serious problems in American public education.

Peach, Larry, and Thomas L. Reddick. A STUDY OF THE ATTITUDES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE CONCERNING ETHICAL BEHAVIORS. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Memphis, Tennessee, November 19-21, 1986. **ED 277 155**.

A two-part questionnaire concerning ethical behavior was prepared and distributed to 300 public school teachers and 75 administrators in the middle geographic region of Tennessee. Each of the two groups tended to regard the other group as more likely to practice unethical behaviors, but both groups denied that either group practiced these behaviors frequently.

Pritchard, Ivor. "Character Education: Research Prospects and Problems." AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION 96(August 1988):469-95. **EJ 378 361**.

This article reviews the issues and research problems associated with that form of moral education in which good character is central. It suggests that the questions raised by these complex and sensitive issues are unavoidable, and that the answers are unclear.

Pritchard, Ivor. MORAL EDUCATION AND CHARACTER. Based on ideas presented at the Conference on Moral Education and Character, Washington, DC, September 1987. **ED 304 390**.

This booklet describes selected and diverse ideas and recommendations that were presented at a conference. Scholars from the disciplines of history, philosophy, sociology, psychology, literature, and education examined a number of practices and problems that are central to the provision of moral education and the development of character.

Proefriedt, William. "Power, Pluralism, and the Teaching of Values: The Educational Marketplace." TEACHERS COLLEGE RECORD 86(Summer 1985):539-52. **EJ 320 489**.

Powerful elites assume they embody rationality and see themselves as husbanders of a set of common values. Any effort to develop an educationally sound policy on the teaching of value issued must be tied to alterations in the existing distribution of power in our society. Several approaches are evaluated.

Reese, William J. CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF "PUBLIC" AND "PRIVATE" IN AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL HISTORY. Paper presented at the Conference on the History of Education, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, October 14-16, 1983. **ED 237 406**.

How and why perceptions of public schooling and private schooling have changed from the colonial period to the present are explored.

Reese, William J. "The Public Schools and the Great Gates of Hell." EDUCATIONAL THEORY 32(Winter 1982):9-17. **EJ 278 830**.

The current attempts of religious and political conservatives to influence public education is placed in wider historical context. The impact of religious groups and their ideas on the evolution of the public schools in America is traced from colonial times to the present.

Reese, William J. "Religious Schooling in America." EDUCATIONAL STUDIES 17(Spring 1986):116-20. **EJ 335 186**.

This article critically reviews "Religious Schooling in America" (Carper and Hunt, 1984). It maintains that while this edited volume fails to address the philosophical and political problems associated with religious education in the United States, that any single volume on this diverse topic will have shortcomings.

Reese, William J. "Soldiers for Christ in the Army of God: The Christian School Movement in America." EDUCATIONAL THEORY 35(Spring 1985):175-94. **EJ 319 208.**

This article explores the evolution, ideology, characteristics, and public policy implications of the Christian school movement.

Rud, Anthony G., Jr. THE USE AND ABUSE OF SOCRATES IN PRESENT DAY TEACHING. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, Massachusetts, April 17-20, 1990. **ED 322 119.**

This report states that the Socratic legacy has been misused in many school settings. It concludes that an enduring core of the Socratic tradition is valuable for teaching. This core is found in the larger issues raised in the dialogues: the project of moral inquiry and a searching that cuts across social class. These Socratic issues should be of foremost use, and ultimate worth in present day teaching.

Ryan, Kevin. "The New Moral Education." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 68(November 1986):228-33. **EJ 343 780.**

This article traces the history of moral education from the ethics-laden forties and fifties through the value-neutral sixties and seventies to the late eighties' focus on character, socialization, and culture. It offers a blueprint for future ethical instruction based on example, explanation, exhortation, environment, and experience.

Ryan, Kevin. "Teaching Education and Moral Education." JOURNAL OF TEACHER EDUCATION 39(September-October 1988):18-23. **EJ 384 748.**

Teachers play a crucial role in communicating community and societal values. Teacher education programs have a responsibility to equip preservice teachers with an awareness of their future roles as moral educators, and with the skills to create and implement a moral curriculum.

Schaps, Eric, et al. "A Program that Combines Character Development and Academic Achievement." EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP 43 (December-January 1985/86):32-35. **EJ 329 629.**

This article describes the Child Development Project in California, which holds that academic and character education are equally important goals for schools. The project has been established to produce long-lasting effects on children's "prosocial" development.

Schwartz, Henrietta, and Edward A. Wynne. TRANSMITTING VALUES TO THE YOUNG: A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE. Washington, DC:National Institute of Education, 1985. **ED 260 020.**

This section, from a larger report describing a project designed to systematically investigate how religious and traditional values are represented in today's public school curricula, addresses the question of

why values should be taught, and if so, what rationale for teaching values is most defensible.

Scott, Kathryn P. GENDER AND MORAL EDUCATION. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, New York, November 14, 1986. **ED 277 621**.

Four areas of Kohlberg's theory relevant to the gender issue are critiqued, and work by Carol Gilligan, suggesting alternative theories for thinking and behavior, is analyzed, compared, and contrasted. A model of moral development that encompasses a broader view and one that includes the feminine voice is needed. A model of decision making that could be used for curricular planning contains the following components: moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral decision making, and moral action.

Seuffert, Virginia. "Home Remedy: A Mom's Prescription for Ailing Schools." POLICY REVIEW 52(Spring 1990): 70-75. **EJ 414 367**.

This article discusses the history and advantages of home schooling. It reviews available curricula and emphasizes immediate feedback, character development shaped by family values and religious beliefs, and low per-pupil costs.

Shaw, Brian C., and Daniel L. Cummings. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF VALUES EDUCATION. Prepared for the 1990 Main Town Meeting (Portland, ME, May 11, 1990). **ED 322 070**.

Americans traditionally have looked to the public schools to play a role in transmitting society's values to students, and on various occasions the U.S. Supreme Court has emphasized the role of the nation's schools in inculcating basic values. The major doctrinal areas of legal constraints on values instruction discussed in the paper are: (1) religion; (2) political orthodoxy; (3) teacher versus personal affirmation; (4) parental rights; and (5) teachers' academic freedom.

Singh, B. R. "Neutrality and Commitment in Teaching Moral and Social Issues in a Multicultural Society." EDUCATIONAL REVIEW 41(1989): 227-42. **EJ 398 609**.

Neutrality is of questionable relevance in teaching social issues related to racial or sex discrimination. Because these essentially moral issues are relevant to everyone, a teacher should be committed to fundamental values of justice, fairness, and respect for others. Teaching methods include development of cognitive and affective qualities and logical and moral reasoning.

Starratt, Robert J. "Building an Ethical School: A Theory for Practice in Educational Leadership." EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION QUARTERLY 27(May 1991): 185-202. **EJ 425 540**.

During a period of school restructuring, educational administrators need to consider their responsibility to promote an ethical school envi-

ronment. This article develops three foundational ethical themes (critique, justice, and caring) as the pillars underlying ethical schools.

Steutel, Jan W. "Education, Motives, and Virtues." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 15(October 1986):179-88. **EJ 343 090**.

This article provides a conceptual analysis of the motivation of virtuous behavior. It suggests educational practices which will aid in the development of kind, sincere, just, reliable, and helpful people.

Strandberg, Warren, ed. THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSION OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION. PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION SOCIETY. Williamsburg, Virginia, September 28-29, 1990. **ED 331 793**.

This volume of proceedings presents papers in four sections, including the keynote address, the presidential address, a focus book symposium, and concurrent sessions.

Thomas, M. Donald. CHARACTER EDUCATION. South Carolina, 1985. **ED 261 473**.

This paper proposes that schools resume their historic role in cultivating basic moral values in their students, based on what is defined as our national ethos. Character education should begin with development of thinking skills based on a study of literary, political, and philosophical tradition, followed by opportunity for students to confirm the value of moral behavior through their own interaction.

Tuck, Kathy D., and Aretha A. Albury. VALUES EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS. Washington, D.C.: District of Columbia Public Schools, 1990. **ED 331 930**.

This survey assesses the status of student, teacher, and parent values in Washington (District of Columbia) public schools and examines attitudes toward current values-centered programs. Six value domains, which have the greatest impact on adolescent social and psychological development, are included, such as education, moral, social, spiritual, cultural, and self-esteem. The findings of the survey are highlighted.

Tyson-Bernstein, Harriet. "The Values Vacuum: A Provocative Explanation for Parental Discontent." AMERICAN EDUCATOR 11(Fall 1987): 14-21. **EJ 360 260**.

This article discusses the following complaints about schools that, though brought up by religious fundamentalists, are deserving of consideration by more liberal Americans and educators: (1) neglect of moral values; (2) over-emphasis on the value of objectivity; (3) school management practices; and (4) a curriculum robbed of any point that might lead to controversy.

Vitz, Paul C. RELIGION AND TRADITIONAL VALUES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education, 1985. **ED 260 019**.

This section, from a larger report describing a project designed to systematically investigate how religious and traditional values are represented in today's public school curricula, presents seven studies intended to examine how religion, religious values, and family and family values are presented in the typical textbooks used in the nation's public schools.

Vitz, Paul C., et al. EQUITY IN VALUES EDUCATION: DO THE VALUES EDUCATION ASPECTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULA DEAL FAIRLY WITH DIVERSE BELIEF SYSTEMS? Washington, DC: National Institute for Education, 1985. **ED 260 017**.

This comprehensive report is intended to examined equity in values education in public school curricula and is organized into two major sections. Section 1 is empirically oriented and presents evidence describing how religion and traditional values are represented in the nation's public school textbooks. Section 2 addresses the question of why values should be taught, and if so, what rationale for teaching values is most defensible.

Vokey, Daniel. "Objectivity and Moral Judgement: Towards Agreement on a Moral Education Theory." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 19(January 1990): 14-23. **EJ 422 027**.

This article begins constructing a conceptual framework for moral education programs by providing an account of the objectivity of moral judgement. It argues that moral education must help students choose values to inform moral judgement; recognize and contend with moral conflict; and develop critical reflection skills for examining the assumptions that inform moral decisions.

Walker, Lawrence, J. "The Family: A Viable Context for Moral Development." MORAL EDUCATION FORUM 15(Winter 1990): 13-20. **EJ 427 809**.

This article examines the relationship between the parent's and the child's level of moral reasoning. It studies children in grades 1, 4, 7, and 20 and the sample includes 80 family triads. It also finds moral discussions are facilitated by humor, listening, and praise. It maintains parents play influential roles in children's moral development contrary to Piaget's and Kohlberg's views.

Wallwork, Ernest. "Sentiment and Structure: A Durkheimian Critique of Kohlberg's Moral Theory." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 14(May 1985): 87-101. **EJ 321 664**.

Durkheim's treatment of the emotional and dispositional aspects of morality are examined. It is argued that the cognitive developmental paradigm as developed by Kohlberg needs to be supplemented by several key Durkheimian insights about moral sentiments.

Walsh, Kevin. THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF EDUCATION. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, Lewsiburg, PA, July 19-21, 1990. **ED 323 613**.

Three dimensions of education—development of knowledge, training of mental abilities, and development of character—and their implications for social and individual good are discussed in this paper. Education is described as the process that prepares young people for their social inheritance through the transmission of societal values. A recommendation is that knowledge development should be based on cultural knowledge and should stress student effort over whatever interests the child already happens to have. A conclusion is that failure to develop character and morality through education fails the fundamental premise of education—the preparation of the young to inherit and strengthen their society.

Welch, Mary Leanne. A BEGINNING: RESOURCE BOOK FOR INCORPORATING VALUES AND CHURCH TEACHINGS IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1990. **ED 330 606**.

The permeation of gospel values into the entire curriculum is a mandate for the Catholic school. Permeation involves viewing, articulation, and evaluating content, methods, structures, and relationships through the eyes of faith. This guide provides methods, background, and resources to use in value permeation of classroom content.

Willinsky, John. "Recalling the Moral Force of Literature in Education." JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT 22(August 1988):118-22. **EJ 376 671**.

This article reviews the arguments of Matthew Arnold, F. R. Leavis, and Louise Rosenblatt for making literature a mainstay of education. It defends the moral and educational value of literature in both its aesthetic and testimonial aspects.

Wilson, John, and Barbara Cowell. "Method, Content, and Motivation in Moral Education." JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION 16(January 1987):31-36. **EJ 349 987**.

This article maintains that the content and methods of moral education are inextricably intertwined. It develops a view of moral education which recognizes the synthesis of content and process in students' school and home life.

Wynne, Edward A. "The Great Tradition in Education: Transmitting Moral Values." EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP 43(December/January 1985/86):4-9. **EJ 329 620**.

Moral instruction was an accepted part of the educational system until the 1930s. More recent approaches to moral instruction are discussed and criticized. The author states that it is specious to talk about

student choices, that school is inherently doctrinal, and that the question to ask is, What will be indoctrinated?

Wynne, Edward A., and Paul C. Vitz. THE MAJOR MODELS OF MORAL EDUCATION: AN EVALUATION. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education, 1985. **ED 260 021**.

This section, from a larger report describing a project designed to systematically investigate how religious and traditional values are represented in today's public school curricula, presents a critical evaluation of the two most discussed and influential models of moral education operating in the United States today, values clarification and Kohlberg's theory.

Wynne, Edward A. SCHOOLS AS MORALLY GOVERNED INSTITUTIONS. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC, April 20-24, 1987. **ED 293 221**.

This report concludes that practitioners can conclude that morality is a valuable resource; moral sentiments should be communicated to one another; hierarchy should be observed; equality should be practiced; reward and punishment should be practiced; tradition is a significant source of authority; rituals can convey values and inspire artistic expression; religion in licensed schools should be serious and nonsecularized; and effective preaching (urging listeners to apply ideals) contributes to the success of schools.

Yeakey, Carol Camp, and Gladys Styles Johnston. "High School Reform: A Critique and a Broader Construct of Social Reality." EDUCATION AND URBAN SOCIETY 17 (February 1985):157-70. **EJ 314 679**.

This article questions certain assertions and recommendations in the reform reports. It argues that if reforms were implemented, schooling would become more highly stratified and low-income children would suffer, that too many reforms entail conservative calls for centralization, and that the crisis in public schooling reflects a deeper crisis in the American ethos.

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